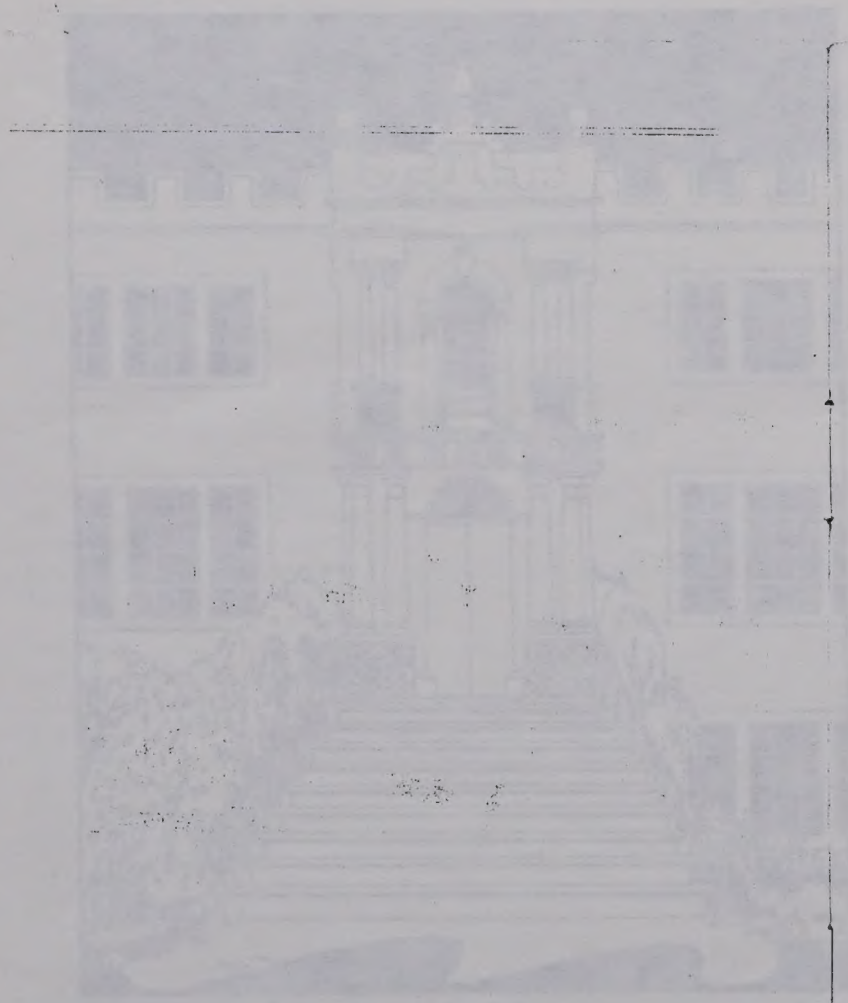


LANCASTER BRANCH OF THE
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

TRANSACTIONS—No. 3

# THE HISTORY OF ASHTON HALL

(Now the Clubhouse of the
Lancaster Golf Club)

*by*

AMY HALLAM

1952.

*D. Lawson.*

WEST ENTRANCE FROM GREEN COURT
prior to 1856

# INTRODUCTION.

ABOUT three miles from Lancaster, surrounded by delightful park-land, stands Ashton Hall, the pele tower of which has withstood the south west gales and storms of the north west for about 600 years. During that time it has been the home of many distinguished families who were prominent in both county and national affairs. Several of its owners were Members of Parliament for the County of Lancashire and some for the Borough of Lancaster and Queen Elizabeth's Attorney General was married to one of its heiresses. It has witnessed the home-comings of some of its owners after the Wars of the Roses, and the Civil War, and some were implicated in the Lancashire Plot to bring back James II to the throne.

# HISTORY.

Ashton Hall took its name from the Manor of Esshton, as it used to be called. " Essh," standing for ash, meaning ash trees, which used to be considered holy, and were greatly reverenced, especially by the Scandinavians, and " ton," meaning, originally, a clearing surrounded by a stockade. James Williamson, who was High Sheriff of Lancashire in 1885, and M.P. for Lancaster in 1886, and who owned the Hall until fairly recently, took his name of Baron Ashton from this Country House which consisted of a pele tower with additions of a later date.

The site has a history of some thousands of years, as elk heads were discovered when the fish ponds were drained. These heads must have been there since the ice age and others have been found embedded in the peat moss at Crowlands near Southport, and in October, 1950, one was dug up at Preesall. Some of these may be seen in the Preston Museum.

The Romans used to live in these parts, as when the Canal was being cut in 1794, about a mile north-east of Ashton Hall, seven stone figures were found in a small hillock in a pasture field. The whole of them were within the compass of about 6 yards square and laid carefully in a hole about 3ft. deep. They were all entire until the workmen accidentally broke them with their tools. The mutilated parts, particularly the head of the figure representing Ceres, was sought for in vain amongst the earth which the diggers had been throwing up for some days. The figures were two animals, four heads of humans, and the headless statue (24ins. high) of Ceres, the Goddess of plenty, and they are to be seen in the Lancaster Museum.

The tide used to reach nearly to Tarnwater and, as the Hall is situated so near to the Lune Estuary, the water would form a natural protection to some degree. The original dwelling, which would have been made of wood, would provide a half-way house between Lancaster and Cockersand Abbey, and most probably would have been visited by Betty, a girl groom from the Abbey who used to make frequent long journeys. " Tarn " from the old Norse tyorn, meaning " tear " or " drop," gives some indication of the type of land there was in this district. In fact, the country was so marshy that in 1496 when Bishop Redman of St. Asaph, was visiting the Abbey, he ordered that an experienced man should be sent to Lancaster to meet him, and conduct him safely to the Abbey, amid the dangers of the sea. Cockersand



Abbey, which was founded in 1180 as a hermitage by Hugh Garth, who was held in great reverence locally, gave place to a hospital for lepers and the infirm, under Leicester Abbey, and in 1201 it rose to the rank of an Abbey itself, through gifts from Wm. de Lancaster, John de Lacey and others.

In 1066, Ashton was one of the Manors belonging to the Anglo-Saxons Cliber, Machern, and Gillemichael, but it was given by William the Conqueror to Roger de Poictou along with Elhale and Scotford, which together formed one of thirteen divisions into which the thirty-eight manors of Lonsdale were divided. After the Barons' Rebellion, Henry I, in 1102, thinking that Roger was becoming too powerful, gave it to Ivo de Taillebois, younger brother of Fulk Count of Anjou, and from him it descended to Ivo's daughter, Lucia, who, on her husband Ranulph's being made Earl of Chester, returned the lands to the Crown. They were then given to Eldred of unknown origin, who was the father of Ketel, who was in turn father of Gilbert, ancestor of the de Lancastres, Orme, the ancestor of the Curwens of Workington Hall, and a William. William de Lancastre III, great grandson of Gilbert, gave to the Priory of Lancaster a rent of 12d. payable out of his mill at Stodale (Stodday) in order that he might have a chapel on his manor at Esshton.

After William de Lancastre's death in 1246, there being no direct heir, the southern part of the Barony of Kendal was divided among the heirs of his three sisters, Helwise, who was eventually grandmother of Marmaduke, First Lord Thweng, through his mother marrying Marmaduke de Thweng; Alice, who married William de Lyndesay; and Sirrota, who married Alan de Multon, and had no issue.

A moiety or half of the Ashton Manor, passed along with that of Nether Wyresdale, to the de Lyndesays, descendants of Alice, and ended with Christiana, who married Ingelram de Guisnes, Lord de Coucy in France. They had a son, William, who was born in France, who afterward inherited the French estate after his father's death. The other son, Ingelram, who was born in England, died without an heir and his brother, William, being an alien, was not allowed to inherit the moiety of Ashton, and it was escheated to the Crown.

After the battle of Nevilles Cross in 1346, it was given, along with all the land (except Ulverston) that should have fallen to William de Coucy, to John de Coupland who was knighted

for capturing David de Bruce, who called himself the King of Scotland. Sir John's wife, Joanna, survived him but on her death, the Ashton moiety was given by Edward III to Ingelram de Coucy and his wife Isobel, who was the King's daughter. From them it passed to their daughter, Philippa, Duchess of Ireland, and on her death it went to Margaret, Countess of Richmond, the great-grand-daughter of John of Gaunt, who had married the first Earl of Derby and was the mother of Henry VII, and thus it became the property of the Crown again. It was let out from time to time, and when Henry VIII was King, Sir Thomas Parr, father of Katherine Parr, as Master of the Wards and Henry's Comptroller, was responsible for the letting of it. Although Margaret, wife of Robert de Roos and daughter of Helwise, had inherited the northern half of the Kendal barony, she appears to have had some claim on the manors of Ashton and Stodday as they are mentioned in an Agreement in 1307 which she made with her nephew Marmaduke de Thweng. This moiety was shared and inherited by the families of Stapleton, Metham, Thweng and Penwardine, descendants of the sisters of William de Lancastre III.

In 1317, Lawrence, son of Thomas de Lancastre, granted lands in Skerton, Ashton, Brantbeck and Grisehead, to his son John Lawrence and Elizabeth, his wife, and from this time Lawrence was used as the family name. Some historians say that the Lawrences became possessed of a moiety of Ashton by descent through the Harringtons. Christian, a descendant of Roger, the bastard half-brother of William de Lancastre III, married Sir Robert de Harrington at a much later date and that is the only connection that is found between the Lancastres and the Harringtons. The Lawrences were probably descended from Roger the bastard, through his son, Lancelot, who had fourteen children.

In 1331 John Lawrence complained of trespass on his fishing at Ashton. In 1337 he obtained land in Stodday from Robert, son of Thomas, son of Roger de Stodagh. We next hear of Edmund Lawrence being in possession of Ashton. He had married Agnes Washington, the heiress of Robert Washington, of Carnforth. It is he who is supposed to have built the pele tower. He died in 1381, and was succeeded by Robert, who was born in 1371 and was escheator of the County and was knighted. The next owner was called Robert, and he married Agnes Croft,



of Dalton. He was the son of Sir Robert, who had been escheator for the Crown, and grandson of Edmund Lawrence. He had farmed at Carnforth as well as at Ashton. He distinguished himself at Agincourt and was M.P. for Lancashire. He died in 1450 and was succeeded by James, who was knighted in 1482 by Lord Stanley at the Battle of Hutton Field, which was fought against the Scots in the reign of Edward IV.

From him, the manor went to Sir Thomas, his son, who was a Knight of the Bath and one of the Commissioners employed to collect aid for Henry VII. He died young and his brother, John, became the owner. John is traditionally reported to have fled to France in consequence of his having slain a gentleman of the Bed Chamber to Henry VII. This tradition is supported by the fact that there is in the Duchy office a document which is an express pardon granted by Henry VII to John Lawrence of Ashton in Lancashire, formerly master forester of Wyresdale and Quernmore, and a J.P. for the County of Lancashire. In 1534 when Leland, the historian, who had been sent out by Henry VIII to view the Country, visited the hall it was not very big, as he said in his report:—" From Cockersand Abbey I rode over the sands marking the salt Cotes and a mile over Conder rivulet trilling by the sands to the sea, to a meane place called Assheton of the King's Lande where Mr. Layburne Knight doth lye and then 2 or 3 miles to Lancaster."

By this, it shows that Sir James Layburne was renting the Hall at that time. In 1539 when Leland visited Beetham Tower he called it a goodly place of Earl Derby's, so it must have been a finer building than Ashton Hall. Sir James Layburne's stepdaughter, Elizabeth, married Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, on the death of her husband, Lord Dacre, and from her the house of Norfolk and the Earls of Carlisle descended. The Layburnes settled in the Cunswick district near Kendal in the time of William de Lancastre III between 1220 and 1246 but the place where they originated was Layburne Castle in Kent.

On Sir James's death, in 1548, his widow received the manors of Ashton, Carnforth and Scotforth which Sir James had on a forty-four years' lease dating from the fourth of February, 1547. He had expressed a wish in his Will that he should be buried in Lancaster Parish Church, but his wife's wish was that she should be buried at Kendal.

Nateby Hall, near Garstang, was a seat of the Layburne

family, and in 1712, George Layburne is mentioned in Thomas Tyldesley's Diary as being his godson.

Sir John Lawrence had died without issue and his aunt, Elizabeth, who married John Butler, of Rawcliffe, inherited Ashton, and her grand-daughter, Isabel, married Thomas Radcliffe, of Winmarleigh, and their daughter, Anne, married Sir Gilbert Gerard, a barrister of Gerrard's Bromley, who was elected M.P. for the Town of Lancaster in 1584 and 1586, and for the County of Lancashire in 1588. He bought the part of Ashton Manor to which the Crown had a claim, and Queen Elizabeth probably used the money to help to pay for her Army, which she had sent to help Henry IV of France at the siege of Rouen.

Sir Gilbert Gerard had been put in prison by Queen Mary for favouring Elizabeth, but when the latter came to the throne she made him Attorney General and he was sent to Ireland to reform the Exchequer. In 1565 he was on the home circuit and was a member of various commissions. In 1580 he was knighted at Greenwich and became Master of the Rolls, and as Attorney General took part in many famous trials, and in 1593 he was holding the manor of Cliderlow, now Clitheroe.

In the Historical Exhibition at Preston, in March, 1950, there was a document on view which was a Patent of Viscountcy on loan from the Earl of Sefton. It said that on the creation of the order of Baronets by James I in 1611 the second person to receive the title was Sir Richard Molyneux of Sefton, who was brought up by Sir Gilbert Gerard, Master of the Rolls, and eventually married his eldest daughter. Sir Richard died full of honours in 1623 and was succeeded by his son, another Richard, who, in 1628, was by Charles I, created Viscount Molyneux of Maryborough in the Kingdom of Ireland, a title still held by the Earls of Sefton to this day.

In Elizabethan times, heirs under age were often brought up in Protestant households, to prevent the increase of power among the Roman Catholics.

While Sir Thomas Gerard, son of Gilbert, was resident at Ashton Hall, James I was entertained overnight on August 11th, 1617, when he was on his way from Carlisle to London. On this journey, which took two months, he was lavishly entertained wherever he went. He had been asked to provide a university for Carlisle, but he did nothing about it. If he had, there might



have been no Durham University. On his way south, he stayed a night at Brownswood House, Kendal.

James was a very vain and pretentious man, and we can imagine his strutting about on his spindly legs, dressed in his velvet suit, well padded, as a protection against his enemies' daggers. He may have looked out from the Hall, through a tiny square window across the river estuary to the spit of land, where about two hundred years later a little negro boy was laid to rest. If he had stayed longer, he might have taken part in the bowling matches which were held in enclosed land in front of the Manor Inn at Cockerham, and watched the cock fighting and coursing which took place nearby. However, James stayed the next night at Sir Edward Tyldesley's home, Myerscough Hall, and in Sir Thomas Tyldesley's diary there are records of the feasts and revels which took place there. It was as a result of this Lancashire visit, with the feastings and games, which led to the publishing by James of his " Book of Sports." He commanded that this book should be read in all the churches, and it was ordered that Sunday afternoons were to be kept as holidays with amusements and the playing of games by everyone in the Parish. Thousands of the Clergy refused to read it, and James became very unpopular on account of it.

In order to entertain James, the Hall must have been considerably larger than it is now. It was, as a matter of fact, three storeys high and had a wing facing east of which nothing now remains.

About two months after James's visit to Ashton Hall, Thomas Baron Gerard died, and his son, Gilbert, succeeded, and after Gilbert's death in 1622, he was in turn succeeded by his son, Dutton, whose daughter, Elizabeth, married, for her first husband, Colonel Philip Wainman, and they were living at the Hall when Charles II stayed during the night of August 12th, 1651, as he was proceeding from Carlisle with his friends and faithful adherents from Cumberland. After declaring Charles as the King, at the Market Cross at Lancaster, many Lancashire gentry flocked to his standard and went on that fateful march to Worcester. Three years previously, in August, 1648, the Duke of Hamilton at the head of the Covenanters, who were on the King's side, reached Hornby and finding that all the ministers of the District had fled to Lancaster for safety

sent thither to ask them to return to their churches but without result.

The Duke marched through the town and stayed at Ashton Hall which was in later years to become the inheritance of his family. Colonel Wainman did not live long after Charles II's visit and his widow married the Hon. William Spencer, son of Lord Spencer of Wormleighton in Warwickshire. He was one of the magistrates who tried George Fox at Lancaster in 1663, and was M.P. and High Sheriff of the County Palatine. There were ten children, four of whom died at Ashton Hall. The son, Charles, died without issue. The Spencers owned Woodacre Hall, near Barnacre, and thus it came into the possession of the Hamiltons. There was a Spa well where the Hamiltons used to bathe, and it was there up to a hundred and twenty years ago, if it is not there now. There was also a cottage near, which bore the Hamilton's initials " I.H.," and the date " 1753."

After the Hon. William died, Lady Elizabeth survived him with a daughter.

The Spencers, who had made their money out of wool, were descendants of the daughter of Sir Thomas Kittson of Carnforth, who was knighted at the Coronation of Anne Boleyn. From her were descended also, Mr. Winston Churchill, George Washington and Earl Spencer. In his diary of the year 1712, Thomas Tyldesley, of Myerscough Lodge, mentions going to court at Cos. Spencers. This would be the court held by Sir William as Lord of the Manor of Ashton. The daughter of this Lady Elizabeth, married Robert Hesketh of Rufford and their daughter, Elizabeth, became, in 1714, the wife of Sir Edward Stanley, who later became the eleventh Earl of Derby.

Elizabeth, the only daughter of Digby Lord Gerard, married James, Earl of Arran, who became fourth Duke of Hamilton, and thus the Hall came into the possession of the Hamiltons.

The first Duke of Hamilton, James, who died in 1479, was descended from Walter de Hamilton or Fitzgilbertson, who after swearing fealty to Edward I, became a supporter of Robert Bruce, and married the widow of Archibald, fifth Earl of Douglas, hence the family names of Archibald as a Christian name and Douglas Hamilton as the surname.

The Earl of Arran made a conspicuous figure during the reigns of Charles II and James II; by both of whom he was deputed Envoy Extraordinary to the Court of France. Besides



holding many other posts of honour, he was made Lord Lieutenant of the County of Lancaster in 1710, Custus Rotulorum and Ranger of the Royal Forests in the said County, also Admiral of the Sea Coasts and, in 1711, was created Duke of Brandon and Baron of Dutton, the honour of Gerard thus dying out.

In 1713 he fought a duel with Lord Mohun, whose wife and his own were cousins. Both men were killed and after the Duke's death the Duchess went to live at Woodacre Hall, where she died in 1744.

In 1620 Francis Bindloss, who in 1627 was M.P. for the Borough of Lancaster, and was son of Sir Robert Bindloss, of Borwick Hall, whom James I had knighted, was living at Ashton Hall, and during that time Richard Brathwaite, a poet who had been born at Burneside Hall, near Kendal, in 1588, and was Francis's cousin (his mother having been Sir Robert's sister) paid two visits and mentioned them in one of his poems, " Barnabae Itinerarium," remarking on the spacious cellars at Ashton Hall. Brathwaite, whom W. G. Collingwood, the historian, called the first of the lake poets, wrote poems in Latin and English, and several books. One was called " Essays on the Five Senses," another " Nature's Embassy." He was sometimes called " Drunken Barnaby," after one of the characters in his poems, and sometimes " Dandy Dick," by the country people. There is a poem almost certainly written by him, about the great accident, when forty-seven people were drowned by the upsetting of the ferryboat on Lake Windermere on October 19th, 1635. The poem was published next year in London, and one copy survives in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and is a very curious work written in Latin.

Brathwaite lived as an independent gentleman in Westmorland and became Deputy Lieutenant of that County. He died on the 4th May, 1673, aged 85, and was buried at Catterick.

The fourth Duke of Hamilton was succeeded by his son who became the fifth Duke, and his son the sixth Duke, married the beautiful Miss Gunning, who after the Duke's death married the Duke of Argyle and became the mother of four Dukes, two Hamiltons and two Argyles. She was created a peeress as Baroness Hamilton. Her eldest son, James George, the seventh Duke, on the death of the Duke of Douglas in 1761, became the male representative and chief of the famous house of Douglas, and his guardians made an unsuccessful attempt to obtain the

possession of the family estates. He was succeeded by his brother, who became the eighth Duke, and on his death, his uncle, Archibald, his father's youngest brother became the ninth Duke in 1779.

In 1757 Ashton Hall had been leased to George Yeats for seven years until the ninth Duke came of age, and on leaving the Hall, he, George Yeats, resided at the house called the Hole of Ellel which he had built.

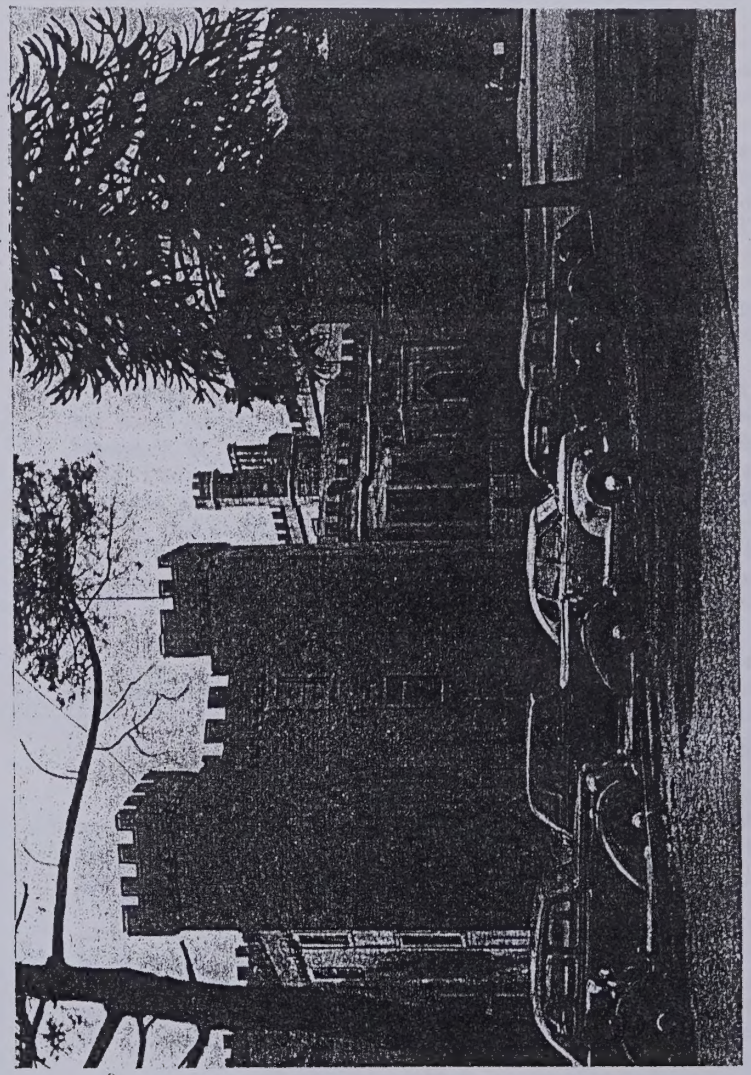
The ninth Duke used to attend Forton Independent Chapel and take along his house party, which greatly increased the congregation. At that time there were horse races at Cockerham, and bowling and cock fights in enclosed land opposite the Manor Inn. Thomas Tyldesley, of Myerscough Lodge, mentions in his diary very frequently, his visits to the "Cockes," and one visit recorded, took place on a Sunday. The "Cockes" was the sign of an Inn at Conder Green, probably called after the game cocks used for cock fights. There was still coursing in the Cockerham district, and Thomas Tyldesley mentions going a-hunting to Ashton where a guinea was laid that they killed no buck, but after three hours good sport they did, and took part of it to eat at "The Cockes."

In 1835 when the Reverend Dodson took over the living of Cockerham Church he abolished all these sports.

The remains of Harriet, Lady Archibald Hamilton, who died in 1788, whilst proceeding to Bath, were brought to Ashton Hall and afterwards placed in the Hamilton vault, which was situated under the family pew in the Lancaster Parish Church. There was a very imposing funeral. It consisted of six mutes on horseback, a hearse bearing escutcheons of the family and drawn by six horses, two favourite servants in deep mourning, a mourning coach containing the chief mourners, and drawn by six horses, her Ladyship's empty coach and four draped ones, ten gentlemen in carriages, seventy-two tenants on horseback in couples, twenty-four tenants on foot wearing black hat bands and gloves, and a numerous train of servants and other attendants.

Lord Archibald died at Ashton Hall, on the 6th February, 1819, in his 79th year. He was interred by the side of his wife who had been Lady Harriet Stewart, daughter of the Earl of Galloway, and it is said that the front gates of Ashton Hall had not been opened from the time of the funeral of Lady Archibald until the day when the remains of the Duke were removed for





EAST ENTRANCE — PRESENT DAY. *N. F. Hallam.*

interment. Later, the remains of the Duke and his Lady were transferred from the vault in Lancaster Priory to a mausoleum at Hamilton Palace, Lanarkshire.

The Duke had bequeathed the deer in Ashton Park to his daughter, the Duchess of Somerset, and it is said that twenty-five out of the hundred and twenty died of exhaustion, while eluding capture, and the rest were removed in covered carts to the Hon. F. West's Park in Denbighshire.

The ninth Duke had taken a leading part in the affairs of Lancaster and the Ashton district, and was a very generous benefactor. In 1804 he gave fifty guineas towards Lancaster races which took place on the Moor, and he usually acted as chief steward at this function. In 1809 he gave thirty guineas to a Charity Fund Ball which was held in the Assembly Rooms, which are now occupied by the Labour Exchange in King Street, but which used to be the scene of many important functions, which were attended by the gentry from the surrounding district, and to which the Duke used to take his house party, which often consisted of many titled people and relatives of some of the Continental royal families. He was a staunch supporter of the Parish Church, as the Priory was called then, and he gave fifty guineas towards a new organ.

He had a very fine stud of horses and in 1809 he sold one horse for seven hundred guineas, and when the stud was sold it realised two thousand one hundred and thirty guineas. His large collection of pictures and valuable books realised £397,562 in a seventeen days' sale. The pictures included some by Gainsborough, Hoppner, Lonsdale (who was a pupil of Romney and patronised by the Duke), Raphael and many others, but the chief collection was at Hamilton Palace, Lanarkshire.

Lady Anne Hamilton, the eldest daughter of the ninth Duke, became Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Caroline, George IV's wife, and it was she who drew the sketch of the Hall from which the print is taken in the 1807 book by Britton. She accompanied the Queen on several journeys, and was present when the Queen's body was laid to rest in the Royal vault at Brunswick. It was the ninth Duke, who, in 1784, built the mile long wall bordering the Park on the Cockerham road side and established a heronry in one of the copses, from his heronry on the Hamilton Palace Estate. It is very probable that the herons which build along with the crows in the tree tops near Waterside Farm are de-



scendants of the Scottish birds. Very soon after the ninth Duke came into the title, he set about making alterations to the Hall but was very careful to preserve its ancient character.

He was succeeded by Alexander, who became the tenth Duke, and who had spent his early years in Italy, and had a taste for the fine arts. In 1801, after returning home, he was appointed Colonel of the Lanarkshire Militia and Lord Lieutenant of that County. In 1803 he was M.P. for Lancaster Borough, and in 1808 he was sent to Russia as Ambassador and remained there and in Poland until October, 1808. He succeeded to the title in 1819 and was elected Knight of the Garter in 1836. He took no part in the debates in the House of Lords, but was a Trustee of the British Museum, a Vice-President of the Royal Institute for the Increase of Fine Arts in Scotland, and was a Fellow of the Royal Society and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.

He appears to have lived in the Hall in the early part of his ducal career, but later abandoned it as a place of residence. However, in "Clark's Leaves from the Gazette," on August 2nd, 1828, Lady Hamilton, accompanied by her son, the Marquis of Douglas, and Lady Susan arrived at Ashton Hall from Hamilton Palace, and in 1830 the Duke and his family were in residence for the summer. In 1832 the Duke announced that the King had promised a piece of plate for the races, and in 1833 the Duke gave £100 towards the new Dispensary in Thurnham Street, to take the place of the Home of Recovery on Castle Hill.

The next year at His Majesty's Levee, he presented a memorial from the inhabitants of Lancaster against the removal of the Assizes from the town. The Duke's son, the Marquis of Douglas, was Steward of the Races in 1836, when his father gave forty pounds towards the prizes.

The Ashton Agricultural Society was started by the Duke, and the first meeting of the Committee was held at the Hamilton Arms in 1825. A Committee Meeting was held in 1842, so that the Society's Show must have taken place for some years.

In 1841 it was decided to abolish the Lancaster races, and little local information about the Hamiltons is known after this time, as the Duke lived chiefly in Paris. He died in 1852 and was succeeded by William Alexander Anthony Archibald who had married in 1843, Princess Marie Amelia, youngest daughter of the Duke of Baden and cousin of Emperor Napoleon, and after

his marriage he lived chiefly in Paris and Baden, so in 1853 the Hamilton's property in North Lancashire was sold by auction.

At the auction sale the land in Ashton, including 1,528 acres of agricultural land with nine grazing farms, was purchased by William le Gendre Starkie, of Huntroyde, near Padiham, who was for a time Member of Parliament for Clitheroe. One of his kinsmen, John Starkie, was a magistrate at the trial of the Lancashire witches, and a Capt. Nicholas Starkie was killed when Hoghton Tower was captured after being held by the Royalists.

In 1856 Mr. Starkie rebuilt considerable parts of the Hall, taking down the top storey in the middle portion, and lowering the crenellations. The top storey of the main doorway, which faced West, was placed over the stream, and the bottom portion, in front of the old groined entrance gateway of fourteenth century date in the green court.

In 1865 Mr. Starkie died, and then Ashton Hall became the property of his second son, Mr. J. P. Chamberlain Starkie, one of the Members of Parliament for North East Lancashire from 1868-1880, and he resided at the Hall and died there in 1888.

On the 7th July, 1884, the Ashton property was offered for sale by auction, but there was only one bid of £80,000 made by the late Charles Blades, who lived at Parkfield, now the home of Richard Wearing, Esq., Lord Ashton's nephew.

However, Ashton was purchased by private treaty for £100,000 a few months afterwards by James Williamson, who became Lord Ashton. He spent many thousands of pounds on improvements. After Mr. Starkie's death, his widow continued to live there until 1895 when it became one of Lord Ashton's residences, and it belonged to him up to the time of his death in 1930 after which, the whole estate was bought by William Pye, Esq., Corn Miller, of Conder Green, and the Hall and Park were let to the Lancaster Golf Club.

## THE HALL.

The present main door to Ashton Hall faces due east. On the left of it is the fourteenth century pele tower which conforms to the almost invariable rule of having its greater length from east to west, rather than from north to south.

Adjoining the tower, on the north side, are modern additions built of white limestone, which came from a quarry in a field to the left of the lane leading from Conder Green to Galgate. The



pele tower is built of red sandstone and rubble with gritstone quoins and an ashlar parapet. Owing to its slow drying quality, the mortar used at that time was extremely hard, and in 1913, with the tools then available, it took six weeks to bore through an old wall in the Tower of London. The sandstone may have come from the peninsula on which Cockersand Abbey stands or from Overton, across the river.

There used to be a projecting east wing which probably contained a long gallery where the valuable collection of pictures was hung, and possibly, there would be a chapel.

Long galleries were usually built on the north side and were very fashionable in the reign of Henry VIII, but very few were built after James I ascended the throne.

The east wing was still in existence in 1836 according to Baines, the historian.

The room on the north east corner has a fine plaster ceiling and was the drawing-room during Mr. Starkie's occupation. It is now the billiards room for the members of the Lancaster Golf Club and the rooms above are being used as bedrooms for the visitors to the Club.

The room to the left of the entrance is the mixed lounge and ninety members have sat down to dinner in it, leaving room for more. There is very fine linenfold panelling half-way up the walls and the roof is very finely timbered in a style very similar to that in the Great Hall at Hampton Court which was built in Henry VIII's reign.

The doors and doorways are fine specimens of modern timber work on Gothic lines, and it is very probable that the old local firm of John Hatch of King Street, was responsible for it.

There is a fine black marble surround to the capacious fireplace, and the entrance hall has a local stone fireplace and similar fine woodwork.

The staircase, of finely carved oak with massive pillars, is a superb specimen of the art of skilled craftsmen.

The whole level around the building has been raised by five feet and low down on the north side of the tower is a slit splayed on the inside. These slits at such a low level were put in to admit air and a little light and not for defence, as there was no room in which to use a long bow.

The Ashton pele tower measures internally in the basement

50ft. 10ins. by 25ft. 10ins., and the one at Sizergh Castle is 60ft. by 39½ft. The walls of Ashton are six feet thick and the turrets, which vary in size, average 14ft. 6ins. square with walls 3ft. 9ins. thick and rise about 6ft. above the top of the parapet of the main walls.

Few of the old windows remain, but traces of them are left in many places where they have been filled in with masonry. Three large square-headed sash windows have been introduced into the long south front on each floor, and there are two similar windows, one to each floor, on the shorter east and west fronts. The north side is now hidden by the modern building, but in the basement are two doorways now giving access to the basement of the middle wing. From the easternmost of these doorways there was a passage-way 2ft. 9ins. in the thickness of the wall, which may have contained a staircase to the upper floor, but it is now built up. There is a similar passage in the thickness of the north wall at the first floor level, which was, no doubt, the means of communication between the turret rooms without going through the chief apartments.

There would probably be a large room on each of the two floors above the basement. On the first floor, all the family met, ate and slept, and the room above, called the "solar," was the ladies' bower, sleeping apartment and reception room.

The spiral staircases remain—there being one in each west turret and one in the south east turret. There is a small room in the west turret off the present dining-room, which may have been an oratory, but which more recently was called a powder closet.

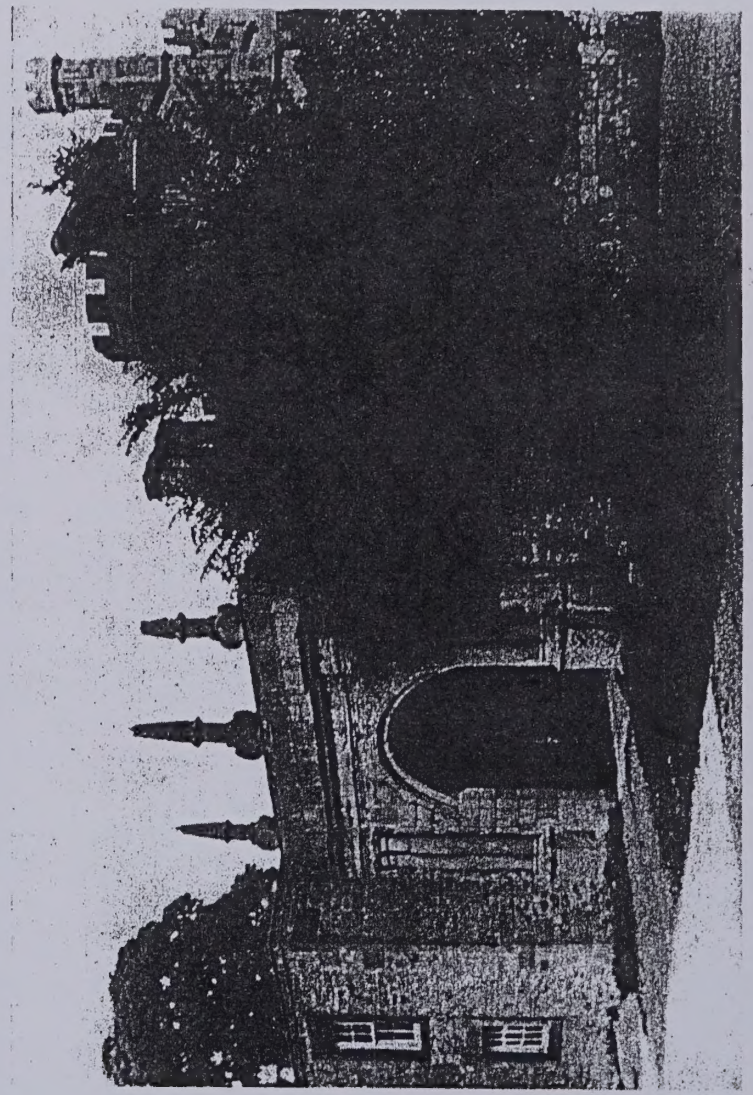
The basement has a mullioned window at the east end and one of three lights in the west end, both probably of 17th century insertion. On the long side, there are three loopholes, 1ft. 8ins. by 6ins. wide, now built up but splaying out inside to a width of 3ft. 4ins. with segmental heads, and there are similar built-up loopholes in the basement of the turrets.

The upper windows of the turrets were small square openings and most of these remains, but modern windows, some now built up however, have been introduced—those in the north east being circular in shape.

The Tudor style chimneys can be seen grouped at the back.

On the south side there is a doorway on the ground level,





*N. F. Hallam*

GATEWAY TO GREEN COURT

which had to be made higher owing to the ground having been raised.

The west doorway is in the middle of the one-storeyed part of the modern building. This portion was originally two-storeyed, but the top storey was taken down by Mr. Starkie when the Hall was rebuilt in 1856. Early Tudor houses often had a single central hall with two storeyed buildings at each end and perhaps Mr. Starkie had this in mind. The decorations above the door are the acanthus leaf, the Tudor rose, and the portcullis which are usual Tudor decorations and are probably from the older building.

The earlier west door was the main entrance and faced the green court. It was an Elizabethan frontispiece and the top part was preserved and was placed over the stream on the north side of the building, and an inscription on it says that it was removed from the old building in 1856. There were two Ionic columns on each side of the part which used to contain a window, and they have carved ribbon designs on the stones at the base. Out of sight now in the foliage, there is a coronet carved in the stone, and there is an ornamental top with a stone ball at each side.

The bottom storey of this doorway was put in front of the groined gateway, probably of the same date as the tower, and it leads into the green court. The top is adorned with Elizabethan obelisks.

Elizabethan features have been retained in the modern doorway into the basement facing west. On the left near the top of the door is carved the head of a man with an Elizabethan ruff round his neck, and on the other side there is the head of a lady with an Elizabethan head-dress.

The doorway leads into the spacious basement. Along one side is a flagged corridor with a barrel ceiling. One big room is used as the ladies' locker room and there are various storerooms.

The heating apparatus is in the basement of the tower and the stone slabs are where the prisoners were supposed to have sat.

There is also a men's locker room and the professional's room and shop.

Lancaster Golf Club can claim to be the only one that has a Clubhouse that was once the home of a member of George Washington's family.

John B. Barber & Son, Ltd. Printers, Lancaster

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# PRE-AMERICAN ANCESTRIES

## V. THE LAWRENCE FAMILY OF GROTON AND BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

By G. Andrews Moriarty, A.M., LL.B., F.S.A., of Bristol, R. I.

The New England of the middle of the last century strongly resembled, genealogically speaking, the England of Elizabeth. In each case there had been a great political and social revolution one or two generations before, which had swept away the old gentry and brought a swarm of *novi homines* to the front. No sooner had these new families become firmly established than they felt the need of bolstering up their recent prosperity with ancient pedigrees and in both cases obsequious genealogists were at hand to furnish them with a lofty lineage based upon imaginary proofs.



The Revolution of 1776 had made a pretty clean sweep of the Colonial aristocracy of Massachusetts. Only a handful of the leading families of 18th century Boston survived that overturn and the names that were once great in Provincial Boston must now be sought in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. The place of the old gentry was taken by pushing and enterprising men, who, swarming into Boston from the neighboring country towns after the Revolution, prospered greatly and founded new families, which by the forties of the last century found themselves well established and began to look about them for a descent worthy of their new importance. Just as the new rich of Elizabeth's reign, the Spencers, Berties, Russells and Fieldings had their Cooke and Dethick, so the new gentility of Boston had their Horatio Somerby. Mr. Somerby was a Newburyport lawyer, who, about 1840, went to England to reside and supported himself by supplying pedigrees to the newly rich of his native Commonwealth. Most of his productions are fearfully and wonderfully concocted but, in justice to his memory, I must state that some of his pedigrees which I have examined have been carefully and accurately compiled upon authentic record evidence. Hence I have been forced to the conclusion that Mr. Somerby gave his clients exactly what they wanted. If they wished a true, if somewhat undistinguished, pedigree, they got it; on the other hand, if they wanted a splendid but fictitious descent, unsupported by facts or record evidence, they got it also.

Among the pedigrees compiled by Mr. Somerby was one of the Lawrence family, which had recently become prominent in Boston, made for Hon. Abbot Lawrence, a leading citizen of Boston and at one time the American Minister near the Court of St. James. Mr. Lawrence, together with his brother, Amos, had come from the little Massachusetts hill town of Groton to Boston early in the last century. By their ability and energy the two brothers had raised themselves to a foremost place in that city. Their emigrant ancestor, John Lawrence, a house carpenter, settled in Watertown in 1635. In 1660 he went, with other artisans and farmers from that place, to settle Groton, where he died a respected member of society in 1667. His son, Nathaniel, became a man of some consequence in that remote and humble rural settlement. He was a deacon of the local church, lieutenant of the local company and a fairly large landowner in a community where land was to be had for the asking. In Philip's War he removed with his family for safety from the frontier town of Groton to Charlestown End (Stoneham) and he died. a highly respected citizen, in 1724, at the house of his youngest son, John Lawrence. This John Lawrence, who was a

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blacksmith, lived in Lexington, Mass., but his posterity returned to Groton, where they were prosperous and respected farmers and the leading men in the rural community in which they lived. From John's youngest son, Amos, descended the two brothers, Abbot and Amos, whose posterity have attained great eminence in the political, professional, commercial and industrial life of Massachusetts.

Such, in brief, is the highly respectable history of the family since its arrival in America nearly three hundred years ago, and with it the family was quite content until the Hon. Abbot Lawrence, about the middle of the last century, thirsting for trans-Atlantic glories, commissioned Mr. Somerby to search out the English ancestry of the first John of Watertown. This was done and in due course a wonderous pedigree appeared deducing the descent from "Sir Robert" Lawrence of Ashton Hall in Lancashire, who in 1191 was knighted by Richard of Anjou for his good services at Acre and given arms, viz. "Silver a cross raguly gules." In this pedigree John Lawrence, the Watertown house carpenter, appears as seventeenth in descent from the "Crusader." This pedigree was printed in tabular form in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, volume X, at page 302. It was also set forth in "The Family of John Lawrence" by the Rev. John Lawrence, Boston, 1869, and in the second edition of Bond's Watertown. As no pedigree is stronger than its weakest link, I propose to examine it carefully and in such examination we shall find that, like all Gaul, it is divided into three parts. The first part relates to the establishing of the parentage of the emigrant John Lawrence of Watertown. The second has to do with the descent of the Lawrences of Wisset and Rumburgh, co. Suffolk, from the Lawrences of Ashton Hall. The third concerns the descent of the Lawrences of Ashton from the crusader, "Sir Robert."

Mr. Somerby identified John, the emigrant of 1635, with John, son of Henry and Mary Lawrence, baptized at Wisset, co. Suffolk, on 8 Oct. 1609, and the Genealogy further states that the will of Henry's father, a certain John Lawrence of Wisset, dated 2 June 1606, "refers to him (i.e. Henry) as having removed from Wisset to New England, and settled in Charlestown." As New England was not settled until many years later, it is a little difficult to understand how a Suffolk man, making his will in 1606, could refer to a son living in Charlestown in New England, which was not founded until 1629, but in genealogy of this sort such little things do not matter.

Now it is true that there was a Henry Lawrence, a fisherman, at Charlestown as early as 1635, who died before 1646, leaving a son John Lawrence and a widow Christian. This John Lawrence, whose wife was named Susanna, was a totally different

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person from the John Lawrence of Watertown and Groton, as anyone may see by referring to that excellent book, Wyman's "Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown." This John of Charlestown died in the Spring of 1672 and on 18 June 1672 administration on his estate was granted to his widow Susanna, who, on 15 August 1676, remarried at Charlestown Thomas Tarball, late of Groton, who had removed, with other Groton men, to Charlestown at the time of Philip's War. The widow Susanna Tarball died at Charlestown on 5 Jan. 1690/1 aged 65 years. She left by her first husband, John Lawrence, the following children: Susanna, Mary, Sarah, Hannah, Abigail, John and probably David and William (this last later of Providence, R. I.). All of these persons are well known and their history may be found in the records of Middlesex county, Massachusetts.

John Lawrence of Watertown and Groton, on the other hand, had a first wife Elizabeth and married secondly at Charlestown, 2 Nov. 1664, Susanna Batchelder, by whom he had two daughters. He died testate at Groton on 11 July 1667. He had issue John, Nathaniel (ancestor of the Boston family), Joseph, Jonathan, Mary, Peleg, Enoch, Samuel, Isaac, Elizabeth, Zachariah, Abigail and Susanna; a fruitful and Puritanical array. There was also at Groton a Phoebe Lawrence, who on 24: 10: 1675 had issue a natural son, Eliezer. Who she was, I have not been able to ascertain.

These facts conclusively shew that John Lawrence of Watertown and Groton and John, son of Henry Lawrence of Charlestown, were entirely different persons and hence we get no help here to shew that John of Watertown was the son of Henry Lawrence of Wisset.

In the second edition of Bond's Watertown, where the Lawrence pedigree is printed, it is stated, without more, that Robert Lawrence, who is a known son of Henry Lawrence of Wisset, mentions in a deposition his brother "John in New England." Such a statement, without reference as to where the above deposition is to be found and without any further information, is, of course, without any probative value. As all the information regarding the English ancestry of the Groton Lawrences is derived from Mr. Somerby's researches, I have searched his original notes upon the Lawrence family, deposited, with his other papers, in the library of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, for this deposition without success. I would like further to point out that even if such a deposition actually exists more evidence would be necessary to shew that it actually referred to John of Watertown.

As the case stands we have only Mr. Somerby's word that there was such a deposition and when we consider that a great

many of the pedigrees constructed by him are either unprovable or have been actually disproved,[a] such a statement, without more, has no probative value. Accordingly the only verdict that can be rendered, as regards the parentage of John Lawrence of Watertown, is the Scotch one of "not proven," and, while it is most probable that John Lawrence was a Suffolk man, as the name is quite common in that county, it seems unlikely that he belonged to the Wisset and Rumburgh family, whose social status was considerably higher than that of the Watertown settler.

We now turn to the pedigree of the Wisset and Rumburgh family, which can be traced back for a number of generations in Rumburgh to a certain Thomas Lawrence of Rumburgh, whose will was dated 17 July 1471. The pedigree, without giving any proof, states that he was the son of a certain John Lawrence, who is said to have died in Suffolk in 1461 and that he in turn was the son of Nicholas Lawrence of Agercroft, a cadet of the Lawrences of Ashton Hall in Lancashire. This is probably based upon some Tudor compilation and its value can be estimated by the statement that Nicholas Lawrence, who lived in the first half of the fifteenth century had a grandson, who died in 1601! Lancashire is a long way from Suffolk and better proof than the unsupported statement of some Tudor pedigree maker is necessary to connect the two families. The late William Whitmore, Esq., of Boston in a carefully compiled article in the *Herald and Genealogist* shewed that the descent of the Suffolk family from Nicholas of Agercroft was totally unproved.

We now reach the last lap of this preposterous pedigree, i.e., the descent of the Lawrences of Ashton Hall from the companion in arms of the Lion Hearted Richard. The public records, calendars and abstracts of which for this early period are now in print, are strangely silent regarding this family until the middle of the fourteenth century, when the name begins to occur in connection with Ashton (cf. Victoria County History of Lancashire under Ashton). As to the valiant "Sir Robert," he was so shy and modest as to his exploits against the accursed Paynim that he does not make his existence known until some three hundred years later in the spacious days of the Tudors, about the time when such heroes of the preceding centuries begin to come to life. I have long sought the origin of "Sir Robert" and his immediate successors and I have, at last, found it, as I believe, in a pedigree compiled by Garter Wriothesley (died 1534) for his kinsmen the Dorset Lawrences, whom he foisted onto the Ashton Hall family; since that time, "Sir Robert," like his comrade in arms, "Sir Miles Carrington," the mythical ancestor of the Smith-Carringtons, has been sounding his fame

a For example, Sears, Warren, Sturgis and Arnold.

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loud and long both here and in England. (This pedigree will be found in Hutchin's Dorset.)

To sum up.. There is no evidence that the Lawrences were at Ashton Hall prior to the middle of the fourteenth century; there is no evidence that the Suffolk family of the name derive from the Lancashire family; and finally there is no evidence that John Lawrence, son of Henry of Wisset, is identical with John Lawrence, the early settler of Watertown and Groton.[b] The name is derived from that of a well-known mediaeval saint, and at the period when surnames were assumed many persons, not necessarily related, but connected with one or another of the numerous religious establishments dedicated to that Saint, assumed the name.

The writer of this monograph is actuated by no desire to cast reflections upon the distinguished Boston family of the name but, as he descends from two of the children of Deacon Nathaniel Lawrence of Groton, his investigations were undertaken solely with reference to his own ancestry, and this paper is the result of his belief that the true facts about pedigrees should be made known in the interest of sound genealogical studies.

## VI. WILLIAM EDWARDS OF HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

By Donald Lines Jacobus, M.A., of New Haven, Connecticut

An article by the late Col. Charles E. Banks in the *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, volume 62, pages 116-120, gave evidence proving that William Edwards, American founder of the noted Jonathan Edwards family, was son of Rev. Richard Edwards, born about 1590, died 1625, of the parishes of Aldgate and Stepney in London. Col. Banks made the suggestion that the father of the Rev. Richard Edwards may have been a Richard Edwards to whom there is a reference in 1598 in the Middlesex Sessions Roll.

So far as the writer is aware, attention has never been called in this connection to the Richard Edwards who appeared as complainant in an action brought in 1590, found in Chancery Proceedings, 1 Eliz. B. & A. E. 5, 12. The documents were, however, published in *Suffolk Manorial Families*, by Joseph James Muskett and Frederic Johnson, Exeter, England, 1914, volume 3, part 2, page 51, as the defendant in the action was John Fairclough of Bedfordshire, and pages 43-75 in this volume are concerned with records pertaining to the Fairclough family.

b The Lawrences, like other Boston families for whom Mr. Somerby worked, unfortunately gave their children names connected with his (since proved worthless) pedigrees. Thus we have Ashton Lawrence, Knyvet Sears, and Clipston Sturgis, all names derived from Mr. Somerby's work and based on the mistaken assumption that his work was reliable.

New England for Visitors

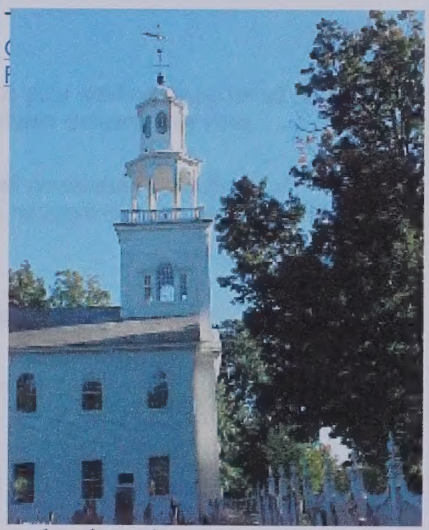
# Spend a Fall Day in Southern Vermont's Gateway:

# Old First Church and the Robert Frost Gravesite

The Bounty of Bennington

Dateline: 09/30/99

"I had a lover's quarrel with the world," reads the epitaph on Robert Frost's grave stone in the cemetery adjacent to Old First Church in Bennington, Vermont. Frost (1874-1963), a New Englander and one of the most loved poets of his time, wrote the line in a 1942 poem titled, *The Lesson for Today*.



Church dates to 1805--it replaced a 1763 meeting house on the spot--and the cemetery is also the final resting place for five Vermont governors and many of the brave volunteers who died at the Battle of Bennington in 1777. Frost bought a plot there following his wife Elinor's unexpected death--she had hoped to have her ashes scattered at their farm in New Hampshire.

Before I set out on my Bennington pilgrimage, I found my book of Frost's complete works, *The Poetry of Robert Frost*, tucked away on the bookshelf in my office, intending simply to know its whereabouts when I returned. I was surprised to find that I was carrying it with me when I got down to my car. And even more surprised that after visiting the poet's gravesite, when I opened the 607-page book randomly, I opened straight to one of my favorite Frost poems (insert eerie coincidence music here).

*THE MASTER SPEED*

*No speed of wind or water rushing by*
*But you have speed far greater. You can climb*
*Back up a stream of radiance to the sky,*

*And back through history up the stream of time.*
*And you were given this swiftness, not for haste*
*Nor chiefly that you may go where you will,*
*But in the rush of everything to waste,*
*That you may have the power of standing still–*
*Off any still or moving thing you say.*
*Two such as you with such a master speed*
*Cannot be parted nor be swept away*
*From one another once you are agreed*
*That life is only life forevermore*
*Together wing to wing and oar to oar.*


- Back to The Bounty of Bennington
- Continue the Tour
- The Bennington Battle Monument
- The Bennington Museum
- The Apple Barn
- Armstrong's

Vermont Links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Front view of the addition to the original Ashton Hall.

Side view of the original building.

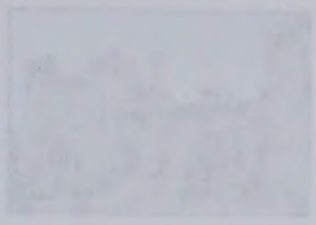
An old Lawrence in front of an old Lawrence estate.

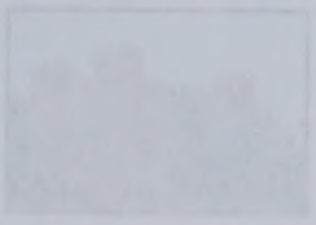
Back view of the original building from the courtyard.

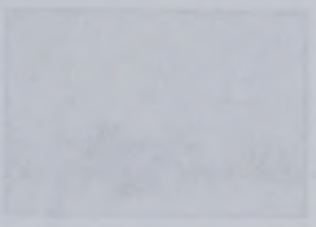
Back view of the addition to the original building.

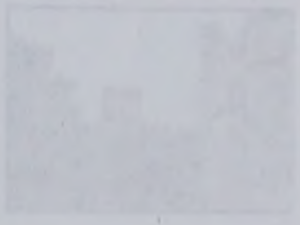
Another courtyard view of the addition.

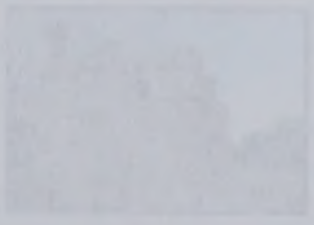
Historical (inaccurate) document posted in Ashton Hall. This document states that the estate eventually went to Elizabeth, daughter of John Lawrence who had fled

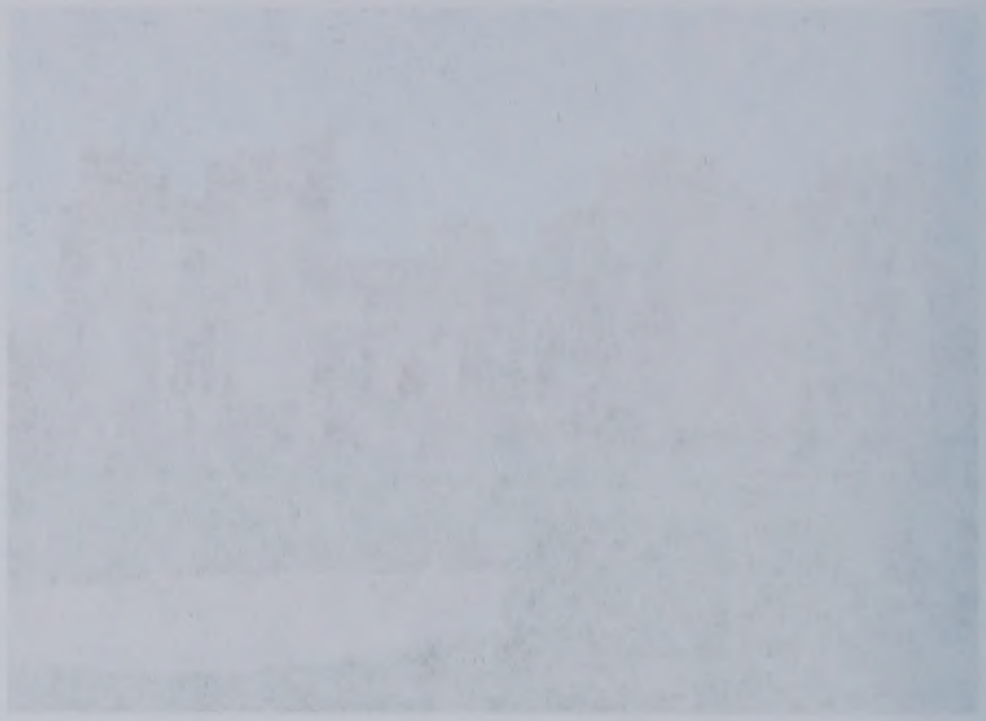












who held a messuage and 4 oxgangs of land and paid 6s.8d. rent; and Randle who paid 7d. In 1292 Gervase de Ashton claimed land against a Lawrence de Ashton. In a list of free tenants some 40 years later are recorded: William son of Lawrence, 2s. 6d.; the same William, for Brantbreck, 1d.; Alan de Ashton, 17 1/2d.; John Ward, 2s. 6d.; John, son of William the Clerk, 20d.; Gervase del Green, 20d.; Henry Alcok 5 1/2d.; in all 14s. 6d.

Traces of the Lawence estate in Ashton appear in inquisitions of some of the heirs, though the tenures are not always recorded. By some agreement, the manor descended through Boteler (Butler) of Rawcliffe to Radcliff of Winmarleigh, and so by marriage to Gilbert Gerard woh purchase the other moiety from the Crown. Thus the whole became united in him and his descendants, the Gerards of Bromley and the Dukes of Hamilton. (Richard Skillecorne held part of it of the king in cocage in 1534. Thomas Regmaiden in 1520 held the reversion of the fourth part of the manor. John Boteler in 1534 held the manor of the king as duke in socage.) Sir Gilbert died in 1593 holding the manors of Ashton, Stodday, and Scotforth of the queen as of her crown of England in a fee farm by the hundredth part of a knight's fee and a rent of £16.11s. 4d.

In August 1648, the Duke of Hamilton stayed a night at Ashton Hall which was, in later years, to become inheritance of this family.

Ashton Hall is currently the headquarters of the Lancaster Golf Club.

Below are some scenes from Ashton Hall in Lancashire, England, October 2000. Click on the thumbnail to enlarge the picture, use your Back button to return to this page.

The lighter color portion on the left is the original Ashton Hall and what existed when occupied by the Lawrences. The portion to the right in the grayer stone was added at a later date.

Front view of the original building.

Geographical Note on Ashton, England and Mr. James Shirley

(Found in the records of Porter J. Lawrence, perhaps hand scribbled by him while examining an encyclopoedia description of Ashton)

Decoded:

Ashton in (Bunkerfield) a small township in the middle of South Lancashire, England. Population 7,463, chiefly engaged in colliries (coal mines) and in cotton manufacture.

Ashton under Lyne (is) a town in the Southeast of Lancashire, England. Population 37,309. To the west of the town is a large mass or shaking bog, containing fir trees full of turpentine and black oak, with a loamy bottom at the depth of 10 feet.

Corby steps or Crownsteps, the word Corby, though obsolete in English has retained its place in the Scottish dialect and in architecture as a sign meaning the succession of steps with which the gables of old houses are everywhere ornamented in Scotland. The fashion like most of the other peculiarities of Scottish architecture was no doubt borrowed as was the term from France.

(NOTE: the Term Corby steps can still be found in the Newworld Dictionary of the American language, Second College Edition., 1986.) RLJ

(On the reverse of this note is written the following note regarding a James Shirley. Why this note is included is yet a mystery but perhaps relates to some issue regarding the Lawrence-Townley Estate. RLJ)

James Shirley, an early dramatic wrter and founder of a classical academy at White Friar, London. (He was) born in 1594 and died in 1666, at the time of the Plague.

William Shirley, Royal Governor of Massachusetts, 1741 - 45 and 1753-59 was commander-in-chief of the colonial forces during the French and Indian war, and was afterwords, Governor of Alabama, born in England, 1693, and died in Roxbury, Massachusetts in 1771.

England. Actually, Elizabeth was a sister of Sir James Lawrence and a daughter of Robert Lawrence. The vast estate accumulated by the time of Sir James was divided between Elizabeth and her sisters.

The Washington Descent of the Dukes of Hamilton who eventually ended up with Ashton Hall. This chart, posted on the wall of the dining room at Ashton Hall, shows that Agnes, daughter of Robert Washington and Margaret, married Edmund Lawrence. Edmund Lawrence was the son of John Lawrence and Elizabeth. The son of Edmund and Agnes was Sir Robert Lawrence (who married Margaret Holden). Sir Robert's son was Robert Lawrence who married Agnes Croft. His children consisted of Sir James, Elizabeth, Margaret, Agnes, and Alice and others not shown. The chart shows (although hard to read due to the glare) that Elizabeth, who married John Butler (Boteler) succeeded to Ashton Hall and from there the estate eventually fell into the hands of the Dukes of Hamilton.

A painting of Ashton Hall (date unknown, probably 1800s) that is displayed at Ashton.

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## Ashton Hall, Ashton-with-Stodday, near Lancaster, UK

I'd always presumed that the Hall was a Victorian folly built for the linoleum magnate and MP James Williamson (Jnr.), Lord Ashton. However, there's been a manor house/baronial castle on this site since 1066 and parts of the current building may date from the 14th Century. The Lawrence family were awarded the estate for *'valiant deeds'* performed at the siege of Acre in 1191. It later passed by inheritance to the Dukes of Hamilton; the then-Duke visited in 1648.

Substantial additions were made in 1856 (which may partly explain my mistake!) and in 1884 the Hall was bought by Williamson for £100,000. I presume his ownership of the Hall was a prime reason why Williamson chose the title *'Ashton'* when ennobled in 1895, but he didn't actually spend much time here – his main Lancaster home was in Ryelands Park, in the city itself. That said, he did have a station built on the adjacent Lancaster-Glasson railway line, for his own private use.

The Grade I Listed building is now the clubhouse of Lancaster Golf Course.

Better ?

### Comments and faves

Hi--I'm wondering if you might help me out. Are you familiar with Lunecliffe Hall, formerly Stodday Lodge? I know it is in the general area of Ashton. I'm an American researching for a book on Victorian Mourning Jewelry. I own a brooch that is connected to Stodday Lodge.

Do you happen to have a picture of Lunecliffe (I know it is now used as offices and is in Ashton Road)? If you are a native to the area, and you have time at some point, might you be able to take a few photos of Lunecliffe Hall for me?

Any help or information you might be able to render me will be deeply appreciated. :)

What sources do you have and would you mind sharing them with me? The Lawrence family who owned this are my ancestors. Amanda Lawrence, born 1818 were of their descent and was my great great grandmother. Whatever information you have to share with me, I would deeply appreciate. I live in the U.S. and don't foresee the opportunity to ever travel there.
Sincerely,
mysunshinemyangel@yahoo.com

It's been three years since I wrote this annotation, so I don't have the exact sources handy – probably photocopies from Lancaster reference library, now deep in storage. :(
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By

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# The Reiver Trail

Explore the historic landscape and discover the Border Reivers

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Welcome to Border Reiver Country! The moorlands and valleys between Langholm, Newcastleton and Hawick form a unique landscape, the living legacy of a turbulent, passionate past. Today they are peaceful, but 500 years ago, they would have echoed to the sound of steel, as men known as reivers came thundering through the night. The word 'reive' means to steal; from this came the word 'bereaved'... This was once life on the Scottish/English divide.

With any border, there are problems - and so it was with this one. This area became a battleground. To survive families started to raid and steal.

From the 14th to the 16th century, the reivers were the riding and raiding families on both sides of the English/Scottish Border. Then, no man could sleep safely and no cattle could be left unguarded. Centuries of warfare between the two countries had created a lawless society where people just tried to survive. Riders, raiders, guerrilla fighters, gangsters – the border reivers gave the words 'bereaved' and 'blackmail' to the English language.

They lived by stealing and the enemy was anyone outside one's own clan. It wasn't just Scotland versus England. These were people who were 'Scottish when they will and English at their pleasure'. Fighting was instilled from birth. When children were christened, the right hand was left out of the ceremony so they might grow up to 'strike unhallowed blows on their enemies'.

Use our interactive map to view and plan your trip.

**Are you a Border Reiver?**
Armstrong, Beattie, Bell, Crosier, Douglas, Elliot, Graham, Hepburn, Irvine, Jardine, Johnstone, Kerr, Little, Maxwell, Moffat, Nixon, Oliver, Rutherford, Scott, Turnbull

Clan Armstrong Trust Museum
Gilnockie/Hollows Tower
Lang Sandy
Tourneyholm
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Carlenrig

**Discover interesting facts about your family:**

First Name: Last Name:

Search

# Ashton Hall

Ashton Hall Oct. 2000
(click on image to enlarge)

Ashton Hall, the ancient seat of the Lawrences, is located about three miles to the south of the town of Lancaster, in northern Lancashire. It is picturesquely situated, commanding fine views of the estuary of the River Lune, and of Morecambe Bay, an extensive inlet of the Irish Sea. Ashton Hall is noted for the sylvan beauty of its spacious park, which is well diversified with hill and vale. The mansion is a large edifice, with many of the characteristics of an ancient baronial castle, having a square tower at one end, and numerous battlements, turrets, and machiocolations. Successive alterations and additions have been made at different epochs, in harmony with the medieval type of architecture. The oldest portion is probably from the fourteenth century. The interior contains a fine baronial hall.

In 1066 Ashton was one of three manors of Cliber, Machern and Gillemicheld and appears to have been accessed of two plough-lands. (The other twom manors, Ellel and Scotforth, retained their connection to Ashton being held by the Lancaster family.) Afterwards, it was granted to Count Rogers of Poitori and a little later formed part of the lordship held by the Lancaster family, being held by knight's service. In the time of Henry II (1154-1189) William de Lancaster I granted half a plough-land to Gilbert de Ashton to hold by service of half a mark yearly. The second moiety wash shared or inherited by the families of Stableton and Metham, Thweng and Pedwarding, and appears to have been acquired by the Lawrence family of Lancaster.

In 1226, the Millfield at Ashton rendered 5s. a year to the king. in 1323 it was held by many free tenants, who in all paid 5s. to the earl. This Millfield contained 20 acres. Tenants were William and Randle le Gentyl and John and Alice Lawrence.

The free tenants in 1301 were Roger de Slene; another who had a messuage and 5 acres for a rent of 20d.; Lawrence son of Thomas who rendered 6s. 8d. yearly; John de Ashton

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## Ashton Hall, Ashton-with-Stodday, near Lancaster, UK

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Ashton Hall, Ashton-with-Stodday, near Lancaster, UK

# ASHTON HALL

## Lancastershire, England

## The Seat of the Lawrences of Lancaster

Ashton Hall is located in Northern Lancastershire about three miles South of the city of Lancaster. It is beautifully set with commanding views of the estuary of the river Lune, and the Morecambe Bay, an extensive inlet of the Irish Sea.

In addition to the mansion itself, there is a sandstone ashlar gatehouse which dates around 1600 A.D. It was extended by the owners in the 19th century. The gatehouse has a segmented arch with Doric columns. An "icehouse" of sandstone rubble and brick stands to the Northwest of the Hall. Also, there is a building to the West of the hall that was formerly a stable block and has been converted into a house. Dating from the 17th century, it is a two story building of sandstone rubble. On 01 August 1952, English Heritage designated Ashton Hall a Grade I listed building. The Grade 1 designation- the highest of three grades, is for buildings of exceptional interest, sometimes considered to be of international importance. The stable block and gatehouse have received separate Grade II designations. The icehouse, an arched conduit mouth, a mounting block and courtyard walls are listed as Grade II (1).

On the East side of the estuary, the most intriguing building on the estate is to be found. The Pele (peel) Tower was constructed in the mid-14th century by Edmund Lawrence, the owner and occupant at that time. The square tower measures internally 51 x 26 feet. The walls of Ashton are six feet thick, and the turrets, varying in size, with walls 3 ½ feet thick and average 14 feet square, rising 6 feet above the top of the parapet. The tower was constructed for the protection of the people inside, not from opposing armies but as a defense from the "border Reivers."

During the mid 14th century and into the 15th century, the Scottish and English border areas were plagued by raids, murders, burnings, thefts and any kind of mayhem you might think about. The border area was a battleground. To survive, many families started to raid and steal. The Reivers were riding and raiding families on both sides of the English/Scottish border. Centuries of warfare between the two countries had created a lawless society where people just tried to survive. The riders lived by stealing and the enemy was anyone outside one's own clan. They were Scottish when they wanted to be or English at their pleasure. Fighting was instilled from birth. When children were christened, the right hand was left out of the ceremony so they might grow up to strike blows on their enemy. Many were Scottish Clans but some were also English families. The raids did not respect their own neighbors. Scots raiding Scots and English raiding English as well. The government stance on this problem was to adopt a law which allowed you to repay the raiders of your property a return visit! All along the English/ Scottish border, Pele Towers were built so that families would be protected during the raids.

"But war's the borderer's game,
their gain, their glory, their delight,
to sleep all day and maraud the night."

Thus, it was more than a coincidence that Sir Edmund built the pele tower early in his ownership of Ashton Hall. Fortunately, the location of Ashton was just out of reach of the night marauders who limited themselves to more local areas.

Another feature of the Pele tower was a slate roof which made the tower fire proof as well. The intent was to make the tower a watch tower, where signal fires could be lit on the roof by the garrison to ward off approaching danger.

Hallam, in her History of Ashton Hall (2), cites evidence of the Roman influence during their control of England. Statues of Roman origin were excavated during the construction of a canal in the late 18th century. These were located in a pasture about a mile from Ashton. Hallam's treatise provides rather complete details of the ownership history of the Hall including detailed descriptions of the interior construction and décor of the Hall. My limited knowledge of architectural and interior design suggests I should bow to Ms. Hallam's descriptions of these traits. They are found at the end of this section. Included below is a list of events or highlights from the history of Ashton Hall.

1066 – It was a manor of Cliber, Machern and Gillimichael, Anglo-Saxon's land.

1066 - land was granted to Roger de Poictou, along with Elhale and Scotford by William the Conqueror. Together the three formed one of thirteen divisions into which 38 manors of Lonsdale were divided.

1102 - after the baron's Rebellion, King Henry I, thinking Roger was too powerful, gave the Hall to Ivo de Taillebois, younger brother of the Count of Anjou. It descended to his daughter Lucia, who returned lands to the crown.

1246 - William de Lancaster III gave to the priory of Lancaster rent which allowed him to have a chapel in his manor at Ashton. He died with no direct heirs, property was divided among his sisters and, after deaths and transfers, it reverted to the crown.

1317 - Lawrence, son of Thomas de Lancaster, granted lands in Skerton, Ashton, Brantbeck and Grisehead to his son John Lawrence and Elizabeth, his wife.

1324 - John Lawrence was granted Ashton Hall for life. (3)

1331 - John Lawrence complained of trespass on his fishing rights at Ashton.

1337 - John Lawrence obtained land in Stodday from Robert de Stodagh

1338 - Edmund Lawrence took possession of Ashton Hall. He had married Agnes de Washington, heiress of Robert Washington of Cornforth. He built the Pele Tower. He died in 1381, and was succeeded by his son, Robert, escheator of the County and was knighted.

1382 - Sir Robert Lawrence, of Ashton Hall, grandson of Edmund Lawrence, married Agnes Croft. He distinguished himself at Agincourt and was M.P. for Lancashire. Succeeded by James, heir and successor.

1450 - James Lawrence, who was knighted in 1482 by Lord Stanley at the Battle of Hutton Fields which fought against the Scots in the reign of Edward IV. James was the last of the name Lawrence to occupy Ashton Hall. James married Cecily Roberts. By this time, the family was well known throughout England. Sir James possessed 34 manors, the revenue of which amounted in 1491 to 6,000 pounds sterling per annum.

1485 - From James the manor went to Sir Thomas Lawrence, his son, who was a Knight of the Bath and one of the Commissioners employed to collect aid for Henry VII. He died young, and his brother John, became owner.

1505 - John Lawrence is reported to have fled to France in consequence of his having slain a gentleman of the Bed Chamber to Henry VII. There is in the Duchy office a document which is an express pardon granted by Henry VII, to John Lawrence of Ashton in Lancashire, formerly master forester of Wyresdale and Quernmore, and a J.P. for the County of Lancashire (2).

1548 – On Sir James's death, his widow received the manors of Ashton, Carnforth,and Scotforth, which Sir James had on a 44 year lease dating from 1547. Sir James Layburne rented the property in 1539.

1588 – Sir Gilbert Gerard bought part of Ashton Manor to which the Crown had a claim, Queen Elizabeth probably used the money to help pay her army. Sir Thomas Gerard, son of Gilbert became a resident of Ashton Hall.

1611 - James I was entertained overnight on August 11th, when he was on his way from Carlisle to London. From all reports, he was lavishly entertained at each visit during the two month trip.

1651 - Charles II stayed a night at the Hall on August 12th.

1700 – 1800 – The Dukes of Hamilton owned the Hall

1757 - The Hall was leased to George Yeats for 7 years, until the Duke of Hamilton became of age.

1819 - Lord William Alexander Anthony Archibald died at Ashton Hall.

1830 – Duke of Hamilton and his wife, Lady Hamilton, arrived at Ashton Hall and were in residence throughout the summer.

1841 - The Lancaster races were abolished and the Duke lived largely in Paris.

1853 – Hamilton's property sold at auction. 1,528 acres of agricultural land with nine grazing farms, was purchased by William le Gendre Starkie of Huntroyde.

1856 - Starkie rebuilt considerable portions of the Hall, taking down the top story in the middle portion, and lowering the crenellations. The top story of the main doorway, which faced West, was placed over the stream, and the bottom portion, in front of the old entrance gateway of the 14th century date in the green court.

1865 - Starkie died, and then Ashton Hall became the property of his second son, Mr. J.P. Chamberlain Starkie. He resided in the Hall and died there in 1888.

1884 - The Ashton property was offered for sale by auction, but there was only one bid of 80,000 pounds made by Charles Blades, of Parkfield.

1884 - Ashton was purchased by private treaty a few months later by James Williamson, who became Lord Ashton. The purchase price was 100,000 pounds. He spent many thousands of pounds on improvements. The property belonged to Lord Ashton until the time of his death in 1930.

1930 - The entire estate was purchased by William Pye, Esq., of Conder Green. The Hall and park were let to the Lancaster Golf Club.

Most medieval castles and Halls carry stories of hauntings and spirits that appear from time to time. Ashton Hall is no exception. Perhaps this is the best way to close this section! The most common report is titled The Starved Ghost of Ashton Hall. The Lord of the Manor was called to battle with the English forces in Europe (his identity has not been made known). The Lady of the Manor was an extremely attractive young woman. Not trusting either his wife or his friends, he locked her away in one of the Hall's towers while he fought abroad. When the husband returned to the Hall she was found starved to death in the tower room. At times she appears as white as a ghost!

In 1788, the wife of the ninth Duke of Hamilton died, and his sorrow was so great that he ordered the doors to Ashton Hall closed. They did not open again until 1819 when he died and was taken through the doors to the ancient parish and priory Church of Lancaster where he was buried beside her. Paranormal experts point out that grief on this magnitude can sometimes create a haunting manifestation.

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# The starved ghost of Ashton Hall

October 26, 2009

Image by via Flickr

There are two Ashton Hall's in Lancaster. The first is part of the council complex of Dalton Square near the murder site and the second is currently the headquarters of the Lancaster Golf Club.

Ashton Hall, now used by the Golf Club, was originally built by Roger of Poitou in the Barony of Lancaster. Only the tower at the south wing remains of this original building which enjoys a fantastic view of the estuary of the River Lune and Morecambe Bay.

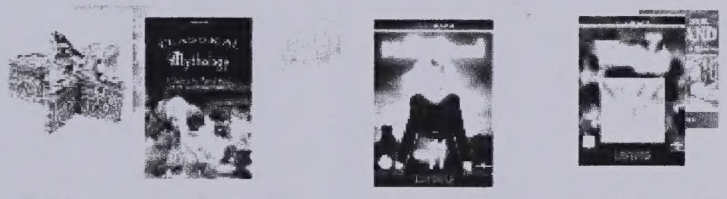
The main hall was built by Edmund Lawrence. The Lawrence family controlled Aston Hall for the best part of two hundred years. Records show that John and Alice Lawrence were tenants in 1323 and also that William de Lancaster I granted a portion of land to Gilbert during the reign of (1154 to 1189).

The old hall has seen an eventful past. At one point the manor was held by John de Coupland who captured David, King of Scots, at the battle of Nevill's Cross in 1436. , of England, and have both stayed in Aston Hall.

**Hauntings**

There are a number of reports of spirits in Ashton Hall. The most common story is a white lady who was locked away in one of the hall's towers while her lord husband fought abroad. When the husband returned to the Hall she was found starved to death.

In 1788 the wife of the 9th Duke died and his sorrow was so great that he ordered the doors to Ashton Hall closed. They did not open again until 1819 when he died and was taken through to them the ancient Parish and Priory Church of Lancaster were he was buried beside her. Paranormal experts point out that grief on this magnitude can sometimes create a haunting manifestation.




Indeed, the wife of the 4th Duke of Hamilton, the lord who died in the duel against Lord Mohun and General Macartney was said to be so upset that she spent most of her remaining 32 years at Ashton Hall, in a bedroom in the south wing. The room is known as "The Duchess's Bedroom" to this day.

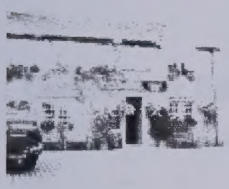
It is also noticeable that Ashton Hall has an unusually high ratio of female descent – ownership of the estate has passed over the female line far more frequently than other comparable buildings.

Roman remains have also been found on the site. Some of the artefacts discovered nearby have included an altar inscribed with blessings to a Goddess of Plenty. This may have been Ops – a mother -goddess who also governed fertility and the harvest. She is celebrated in the festival of Opiconsivia on August 25th and Opalia on December 19th. Is there a connection between this nearby goddess and Ashton Hall's strong line of female descent?

**In Pure Spirit**

Have you attended any of the events held in Ashton Hall? What was it like? Do you have any additional stories of murder at Aston Hall, death, ghosts, spirits or dark mists? Perhaps you have heard an alternative version of the Ashton Hall white lady legend?

**You might like:**



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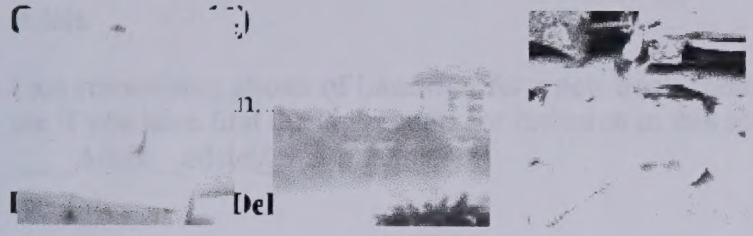

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Sort by:

[...] of their Halloween special. Wow they can eat a lot! or was it because they needed to feed "the starved ghost" [...]
0

Adele ·

I am researching ghosts of Lancaster for a new book commissioned by local publisher. please contact me if you have first thand accounts for inclusion in this scary book!
____Adele__adele@mainshall.co.uk

0

Danielle Perry ·

I am a descendant of Edmund Lawrence of Ashton Hall. I find that Ashton to be haunted is very interesting. I wonder if it's my descendants haunting the hall. You should try contacting Ghost Hunters TAPS paranormal Investigating team to come and look at Ashton Hall.

Danielle

0

beth ·

i hope you don't see this is a lie. my name is miss hogg. my grandma recently moved out of lancaster gold club (ashton hall) she lived and worked there for ten years with my mum and the rest of my family. it was my home. i still go to college in lancaster even tho we moved away. we spent christmases and birthdays there. about 3 years ago when my cousin was three on christmas we found her in a corner crying. when her mum and myself askes her wants wrong she said "molly doesn't want to play with me anymore" then i saw the fire exist door which when you follow the stair case leads to the roof, slam shut. it's a heavy door, no windows were open. then my aunty fainted, when she came to she said she heard a child screaming then a girl, with burnt clothes and a distorted face in the corner of the fairway, which is a small dining room, we later that year discovered there had been a fire in the building.

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1882

Jan 4 Windsor Henry county Mo

Mr P J Lawrence

Dear Sir your favor of Dec 30 is just Received and in Regard to your inquiry in regard to my ancesters I would just Say that I am the youngest of our family and my Parents Both Died when I was quite young that I cannot give you as full a history as Some of the older ones of the family My Fathers name was Simeon he was Borne in 1779 in the State of Connecticut in the town of Canaan and was Married in Hartford in 1804 and moved from the town of Schenectady to Meigs county Ohio about the year

1818 or 19 My Grand Fathers
name was John he was an-
English man and Died in the
State of Massechusetts and was
Buried in Berkshier county my
Father had four or five Brothers
I do not know all ther names
they all lived in the State of
Newyork have lost all trace
of them have not heard from
them for over forty years one
of them was named Lewis one Daniel
one ace one Philomel one Abeth
my Great grand fathers name
I do not know If you wish for
a fuler history my aldest Brother
is still living in Meigs county
Ohio and I can give you a
more correct history his Post
office is Portland now If
you will bee so kind as
to give me a history of your
ancesters I will esteem it as a

great favor and any further
in formation ~~I Shall~~ I shall bee glad to furnish if
in my posstion

Yours Very
Respectfully

Simeon Lawrence

P S My Brothers name
is Henery S Lawrence

Winnebago, August 18th, 1882

Mr. Usher, Dear Sir

I received your correspondence and also your letters and in reply would say according to the by-laws of the association we was not to pay any more than the $500 and that was to be used for the purpose of commencing suit. That was paid in almost a year ago and nothing has been done as yet, in your letter I have before me dated September 5th, 1881, you said that was positively all the money that would be required of the heirs. You agreed to collect it for ten per cent. If the amount is what you claim it to be, I think that the ten per cent would be worth your while to go ahead and collect it on your own account if I see it all right. If we furnish you money to go to London and you should succeed, you are just ahead so much and we are out so much. I don't understand it. I wish you would explain it to me. I know there is a fortune there for us for it has been handed down for generations and that is why I have been so anxious to see the end of it. You say there is a hundred heirs, who are they and where are they. I cannot find anybody but myself. I have been through York State this summer and failed to find a man or a woman that has signed the constitution. I begin to think there is no such an association, Lawrence and Townley Association. Excuse me for thinking so, for you are a stranger to me and I to you. And one reason for my thinking so is the association has no treasurer, clerk nor president and there has been no meeting of the heirs to my knowledge, and now for me to go ahead, I must know that it is all right and then clear the----(illegible). Business is business and right is right, that is my motto. Please answer. I remain yours

P. J. Lawrence
Winnebago, Illinois
Winnebago County

Winnebago August 14th 1882

Mr Ushers Pears Sir

I received your Card & also your letter & in Reply would Say according to the By Laws of the association we was not to pay Eny more than three per Cent & that was to Be used for the purpose of Commencing Suit that was Payed in almost two years ago & Nothing has been done as yet in your letter I Learn Before mentioned Debt of $1881 that was Positively all the Money that would Be required of the heirs you agree to collect it for ten per Cent, if the amount is what you Claim it is to Be I think that the ten per Cent

P. J. Lawrence Esq

Dear Sir

Yours to hand.

In our opinion we think certain that there is sufficient encouragement in the matter, to warrant the publication of the article + have every reason to expect a satisfactory termination. If you find that you are unable to influence its publication please return the same to us as soon as convenient

Yours &c

James Hooker Jr

Hooker + Hooker

#9 Murray St

New York City

March 4th 1882

# ADDENDUM TO THE SECOND GENERATION OF AMERICAN LAWRENCES- FAMILY OF JOHN LAWRENCE-ELIZABETH

## Peleg Lawrence

Born in Watertown, Middlesex, Massachusetts 10 January 1646(47) and died 14 February 1692(93) in Groton, Massachusetts. He married Elizabeth Morse 22 December 1668 in Medfield/Groton, Middlesex, Massachusetts,daughter of Joseph Morse and Hannah Phillips. She was born 01 September, 1647 and died 12 June 1715.

Peleg's wife, Elizabeth Morse, was a sister of his brother Nathaniel's wife Sarah. The Lineage Book of the National Society of Daughters of Founders and Patroits of America, Volume XVII - 1928 - p. 95 and Volume XXXI - 1958 - p.218 show Peleg's birth date as 10 January 1647/1648. Volume VI - 1916 shows a birth date of 11 November 1647

Peleg Lawrence served in a Garrison House during trouble with the Indians, King Phillip's War.

Growing in-lin library, genealogy library.com, "Electronic," New England Families Genealogical and Memorial:third Series, Vol IV, 1998,

"He lived in Concord during the period that Groton was abandoned during King Phillip's War, but returned to his former at Groton Afterward. He was selectman for two years and held various other offices. He lived on the farm now or lately owned by Samuel B. Marshall, on the Boston road"

Early records of Groton, Pg 64:

"in groten 16 June 1681 thar is layed for Palig Loranc and ajoying too and bounding upon the south by swan pond meadow Eleuen acers and a half lauing Rome Round his medow acordin too Town order and bounded upon other sids by the Comon

allso 8 ayte ackers and a halfe a litil distant northword and bounded on all sides by comon land the lins being extant by marked trees and stakes

This too parsils of land ware layd by me John fflint

Recorded by me JOHN Mors, Clarke

This aboue written of Peleg Lawrances land by Agreement is by Peleg Laurance relinguished & yield to Mr. Hobart; March 8th 1681/2 in ye presence of ye select men"

Early records of Groton, pg 183

THE LANDS OF PELLEG LAWRANCE

1. Ten acres, more or lesse, lyeing on the north side of Spedteckle Pond, bounded on all points by the towne's comon.
2. Ten acres, more or lesse, lyeing on by the Cowpond Medow, bounded east by the lands of Nathaniel Lawrance, and on all other poynts by the town's comon.

Deacon Nathaniel Lawrence
Born 15 October 1639 in Watertown, Middlesex, Maine and died 14 April 1724 in Lexington Maine. He married Sarah Morse 13 March 1660 in Sudbury,Middlesex, Maine, daughter of Joseph Morse and Hannah Phillips, born 16July 1643 and died 29 August 1681. He married Hannah (Anna) Before 1683. She died after 14 January 1700(01).
He married Sarah 31 October 1695
According to Daughters of the American Colonists Lineage book, Volume 1 page 365, Nathaniel Lawrence (1639-1724) was ensign of militia and member of the General Court, 1692. He died in Groton, Maine.
American Ancestry has death listed in Lexington and the Mormons have death in Stoneham.
He moved in advanced years to Charlestown Farms.
Nathaniel was an original proprieter of Groton having a ten-acre right. He held various offices in the church and town, and was one of the first representatives to the General Court, under the charter of William and Mary, in the year 1693. Three of his grandsons, Thomas, William and Amos, cane from Lexington to Groton to live.

Third Generation Descendants of Peleg Lawrence and Elizabeth Morse

1. Major Eleazer Lawrence, b. 28 February 1674/75, Groton, Middlesex, Massachusetts; d. 9 March 1754, Pepperill, MA.
2. Elizabeth Lawrence, b. 9 January 1668/69, Groton, MA. d. 10 October 1685.
3. Samuel Lawrence, b. 16 October 1671, Groton, MA.; d. March 1711/12, Killingly, Connecticut.
4. Jonathan Lawrence, b.29 March 1679
5. Abigail Lawrence, b. 6 October 1681
6. Jeremiah Lawrence, b. 3 January 1686/87; d. 26 April 1687
7. Joseph Lawrence, b. 12 June 1688, Groton, MA.
   (Went to Connecticut before 1712 and settled in Plainfield
8. (Daniel Lawrence)
9. (Susanna Lawrence, m. Joseph Williams, 1710)
   The latter 2 children are listed in one source as belonging to Peleg

THIRD GENERATION, CHILDREN OF NATHANIEL LAWRENCE AND SARAH MORSE

1. Nathaniel Lawrence, b. 4 April 1661, Sudbury Middlesex, MA.; d. 1737;married (1) Hannah Rutter, About 1682, Sudbury, Middlesex, MA.; married Anna Fiske, about 1689, Groton/Sudbury.
2. Sarah Lawrence, b. 1 January 1662(63), Sudbury, Middlesex, MA.
3. Hannah Lawrence, b. 3 July 1664, Groton, Middlesex, MA. married

Stephen Holden

4. John Lawrence, b 29 July 1667, Groton, Middlesex, MA. d. 12 March 1746/47, Lexington, MA.
5. Mary Lawrence, b. 3 March 1669/70; married Zebadiah Wheeler
6. Sarah Lawrence b. 16 May 1672; married Samuel Page
7. Elizabeth Lawrence, b. 6 September 1674; d. 20 October 1675
8. Elizabeth Lawrence, Married Abner Harris, 20 November 1709

There is always a question of authenticity since the ancestry frequently depends upon other input than recorded data. This second and third generation seems to have a foundation in written records so perhaps is somewhat more likely than that given previously.

Copy of Opinion in Reference to Lawrence/Townley Estate

We have considered the case submitted to us with the accompanying table of pedigree and the certificates of marriages and deaths shown to us from which it would appear amongst other material matters that Lebius Lawrence died in 1818 leaving several children heirs surviving, and amongst others, his eldest son John A. Lawrence, and his second son, William T. Lawrence.

That his eldest son, John A. Lawrence died in 1857, leaving one son, Norman J. Lawrence him surviving.
That Norman J. Lawrence died in 1861 without issue him surviving
That William T. Lawrence the second son of Lebius Lawrence above named thereupon became and is the heir at law of the said Lebius Lawrence

That Lebius Lawrence was the eldest son and heir at law of Jonathan Lawrence who was born in 1739 and died in 1816

That Jonathan Lawrence was the eldest son and heir at law of Jonathan Lawrence (the elder) who died in 1769.

That Jonathan Lawrence (the elder) was the second son of John Lawrence and Mary Townley who died in 1673 leaving two sons him surviving-John Lawrence his eldest son who died an infant only two years of age, and therefore without issue, and the above named Jonathan Lawrence (the elder). *

That Mary Townley who was married to John Lawrence in 1693 was the eldest daughter of Sir Richard Townley and the Honorable Mary Widdrington who died leaving one son John Townley whose issue has failed, and two daughters- the above named Mary Townley and one Dorothy Townley who was married to Henry Howard (afterwards) Lord Effingham and died without issue.

It would therefore appear that William T. Lawrence is the heir at law of Lebius Lawrence, who was the heir at law of John Lawrence and Mary Townley, and that Mary Townley was the heiress at law of Sir Richard Townley and the Honorable Mary Widdrington.

From the certificates shown to us it would appear that the foregoing matters are all susceptible of easy proof.

In our opinion, William Townley Lawrence is entitled to recover the lands belonging to those of his ancestors above named, through whom he claims as heir at law, unless it can be shown that such right has been interfered with by will or settlement not appearing in the case- but the nature of the estates not being before us, we have deemed it proper to make mention of this qualification.

Dated Toronto 16th May 1876

Blake Kerr & Boyd

*(You will observe the note on the top of this opinion has been in part, mutilated but perhaps can be completed by appropriate interpolation to read as follow:

NOTE: This must be a mistake- John Lawrence and Mary Townley had 2 sons who survived him, one of them, John Lawrence died at two years of age, so that as they both survived him, John Lawrence must have died between 1695 & 1697)

It is unclear who wrote this note.

Persons writing to make inquiries should enclose stamp for postage.

Circulars containing full particulars furnished on application.

# LANPHERE & USHER,

AGENCY FOR THE

## Prosecution and Recovery of Foreign and American Claims,

No. 9 Murray Street, New York City.

E. O. LANPHERE.
JAMES USHER.

June 10th 1881

R. J. Lawrence Esq:

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 7th duly rec'd: and in reply will say we have just completed negotiations with the son and administrator of the late Hon D. B. Carver of Albany. N.Y. resulting in the transfer of all his fathers documents researches in the Carver and Lawrence estate to us.

The case is to be immediately investigated, vigorously prosecuted and if can now settled, counsel being now in England awaiting the arrival of evidence now in preparation here and who is fully empowered to obtain all and every information as will be required to lay claim to your ancestral estate and have it applied to its rightful channel of descent.

For this purpose an association of the Heirs is now forming here and rapidly filling

up. It is limited to one hundred members at five dollars each and no further amounts will be asked.

In case of success, should any member fail to make their claim valid his or her fee will be refunded but all members will have the full benefit of Mr Carnes researches, which embraces about all the families in the country.

Hoping you will join our association without delay, we remain

Yours &c
Langhorne & Baker

Ashton in Bowterfield a small Township in the middle of S. Lanca-shire, Eng. Pop 7463. chiefly engaged in collieries, and in cotton manufacture.

Ashton under Lyne, a town in the S.E. of Lancashire Eng. Pop 37,389. To the E of the town is a large moss & the river Cog, containing fir trees, full of the Hop-tree. Soil black oak. with a loamy bottom & the depth 10 feet.

Arby Style of Crow steps the word was thought Obsolete, in English has returned its place in the Scottish dialect. and in architecture Ca. signify the succession of steps with which the gables of old houses are everywhere ornamented in Scotland. This fashion like most of the other peculiarities of Scottish architecture was doubtless borrowed as was the Terror. from France

James Shirley an early dramatic writer, and founder of a classical academy at White Friars London. born 1594 died 1666. from exposure during the great fire of London 1666. at the time of the Plague.

Wm Shirley Royal Gov. of Mass. 1741-45 and 1753-56 was commander in chief of the colonial forces during the French and Indian war, and was afterwards Gov. of Ala, born in England 1693, died in Roxbury Mass 1771.

# THE TOWNLEY-LAWRENCE ASSOCIATION

Whereas the Townley and Lawrence families in America are entitled to a large amount of real and personal property which is now held in trust by the British government, subject to the demand of the rightful heirs; and

Whereas, we the next of kin and heirs to this property are in America. Now in order to prosecute the investigation and procure all and every information as will be required in order to have a complete and legal claim to our ancestral estate and have it applied to its rightful channel of descent;

We, the undersigned, hereby agree to form ourselves into an Association under the following Constitution:

## ARTICLE 1

This society shall be called the Townley-Lawrence Association.

## ARTICLE 2

Messrs. Lamphere and Usher of New York City, and Messrs. Poole, Hughes and Poole of London, England are hereby appointed agents for the purpose of investigating and prosecuting the case in England and are required from time to time to make a report to the members of this Association of their progress.

## ARTICLE III

The aforesaid Messrs. Lamphere and Usher and Messrs. Poole, Hughes and Poole are to be allowed five hundred dollars for the purpose of making an investigation of the case in England, and for procuring full particulars of the situation, nature and value of the said property, and whatever evidence is necessary to prove out rights in the courts, and in addition thereto we agree to pay to the said Messrs. Lamphere and Usher and Messrs. Poole, Hughes and Poole ten (10) percent of the value of all real, personal and mixed property which they shall recover for our use and benefit.

## ARTICLE IV.

All persons upon signing these articles of Association and agreement shall become members of the Association and shall pay the sum of ten (10)

dollars as a membership fee, to be devoted to the expenses of the suit as before stated.

ARTICLE V.

No member of this Association shall be liable to pay more than ten dollars as expenses or compensation or otherwise to any person or persons whatever.

ARTICLE VI.

The interest of any member of this Association shall be transferable according to law and in case of the death of any member his or her interest shall descend to his or her heirs.

ARTICLE VII.

All members of this Association agree to render whatever aid and assistance that may be in their power and to furnish all information and documents in their possession connected with the said estate, and to mutually co-operate in the prosecution of the claim.

ARTICLE VIII.

In case of success, should any member of the Association fail to make their claim valid his or her fee will be refunded and the branch of the family which gains the estate and money is to bear all the expenses and refund to those who contribute and get nothing and in addition thereto, each member of this Association shall be entitled to the sum of one hundred dollars out of the money recovered. Said bonus shall be made payable on the recovery of the property by such members by such members of this Association as shall recover the property. And out of the first proceeds after payment of the costs of suits and not otherwise and shall be a lien on said estate to be paid and discharged or money retained and therefore, before any division or distribution is made to the heirs. (It is expressly understood that I am not to be liable in any way for any costs, fees or expenses either alone or jointly) In testimony whereof, we have hereunto set our hands and seals this 19th day of September, 1881.

Porter J. Lawrence

We undersigned witness this to be a true copy of the original constitution sent to Lamphere and Usher, New York City.

Signed: John A. Jackson Camilla C. Jackson

# THE MYSTERY SOLVED.

*FACTS RELATING TO THE*

"LAWRENCE-TOWNLEY," "CHASE-TOWNLEY," MARRIAGE AND ESTATE QUESTION.

WITH GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION CONCERNING THE FAMILIES OF TOWNLEY, CHASE, LAWRENCE, STEPHENS, STEVENS, AND OTHER FAMILIES OF AMERICA.

BY

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RAND AVERY COMPANY, BOSTON,
MADE THIS BOOK.
1888.

## CHAPTER II.

## REFERS TO THE GENEALOGIES, TRADITIONS, MEETINGS, AND ASSOCIATIONS OF THE LAWRENCE, CHASE, AND OTHER FAMILIES.

THE following is the genealogy of one of the Lawrence families, compiled by the descendants of John, William, and Thomas Lawrence of Long Island:

" The first ancestor of this family known was Sir Robert Laurens of Ashton Hall, in Lancashire, England, who flourished in 1191, and received the knighthood from King Richard, also a coat of arms, which is appended to the will of William Lawrence, 1680, and Richard Lawrence, 1711, in the Surrogate's office, New York City. Sir John Lawrence, the ninth in lineal descent from the above Sir Robert Laurens, flourished in 1491. He killed a gentleman usher of King Henry VII., was outlawed, and died in exile in France, issueless, when Ashton Hall and his other estates passed by royal decree to his relations, Lords Monteagle and Girard. Three brothers, John, William and Thomas Lawrence, descended from Sir John Lawrence, emigrated to America. John Lawrence, the eldest, was born in Great St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England, in 1618, came over in the ship Planter, N. Travis, Master, and landed in Plymouth, Mass., in 1635, from whence he went to Long Island, afterwards resided in NewYork, where he held many public positions, and died in 1699, leaving descendants. His will, written in 1698, is on file in the Surrogate's office, New York. William Lawrence, the second brother of John, was born in 1623; in 1635 he came over with John, in the ship Planter, and became the proprietor of Lawrence's Neck (so-called) which stretches into Long Island Sound, between Flushing Bay and Whitestone, about nine hundred acres, a part of which is the present site of St. Paul's College. William Lawrence held many civil and military offices, and died in 1680 leaving numerous descendants. His son Joseph, by his second wife, Elizabeth Smith, daughter of Richard Smith, the patentee of Smithtown, married Mary Townley in 1690. After the death of William Lawrence in 1680, his wife, Elizabeth Smith, married the Hon. Philip Carteret, Governor of New

Jersey, in April, 1681, and removed to Elizabethtown with her family. The town was named after Elizabeth Smith.

Philip Carteret died in December, 1682, his widow then returning to Long Island. Thomas Lawrence, the youngest of the three brothers, came to this country after the brothers John and William. In 1655 Thomas and his brothers obtained possession of a tract of land in Newtown, Long Island. Thomas afterwards purchased the whole of Hell-Gate Neck, from Hell-Gate Cove to Bowery Bay. He died in Newtown, in July, 1703, leaving five sons, Thomas, William, John, Daniel and Jonathan, of whom John alone permanently remained at Newtown. A large number of descendants sprung from these brothers, John, Thomas and William. The list is to be found in Thompson's History of Long Island and Holgate's American Genealogy, published by George P. Putnam in 1851. Henry Lawrence was a descendant from Sir John Lawrence, who flourished in 1491,and, therefore, a connection of John, William and Thomas. He was an adherent of Oliver Cromwell, and his picture is seen as President, in Clarendon's history of the Rebellion. His gravestone, not yet effaced, is in the Chapel of St. Margaret, Alias Thele, in Hertfordshire. The coat of arms can be traced on it, viz : -a cross, raguly, gules. The crest, a fish's tail or demi dolphin."

In connection with the above document it is stated, that , Joseph Lawrence (who married Mary Townley, 1690) had as children Elizabeth (married John Bowne, 1714), and Abigail, who married Major Alexander Forbes of the British Army. The descendants of another of the Lawrence families have been given the following history:

The family of Lawrence is traced plausibly to a Robert Lawrence, who settled in Lancashire, and ,vas knighted in 1191 for valorous deeds at the siege of Acre, yet more positively to a sir Robert Lawrence of Ashton Hall, whose marriage to Anna Trofford in 1298 is a matter of public record; and the records of Ashton Hall for a period of four hundred years bring us to a son of the house named John, who married Mary Townley, of Townley Hall. The descendants; of this pair are the heirs officially called for so frequently by the English authorities.

Ashton Hall is situated six miles west of Manchester; is entitled to one member of Parliament, and is remarkable, among other features, for a large church of the time of Henry the Fifth; and the Lawrence family is thus prominent in English history. But the enormous possessions of the Lawrence-Townley family are derived from the wife. Mary Townley was the oldest daughter of Sir Richard Townley and Mary Widdrington, of Widdrington, Northumberland County, of notoriety from his connection with the hero of Chevy Chase, of whom was sung :

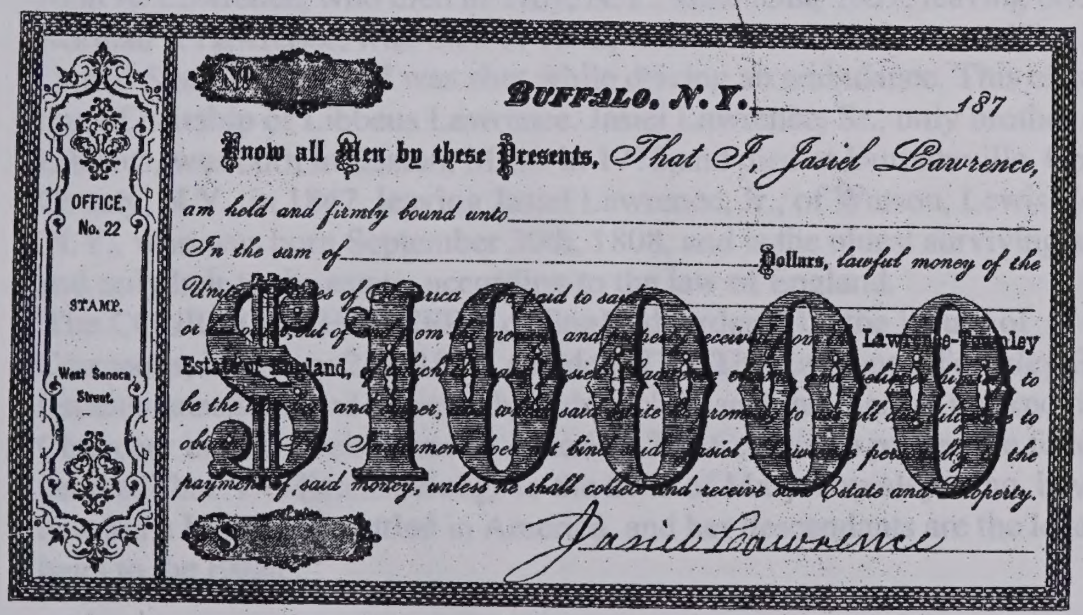
" My heart is woe for Widdrington,
As one in doleful dumps ;
For when his legs were smitten off,
He fought upon his stumps."

The Widdrington Estate included many mining properties in Durham County near to New-Castle-upon-Tyne. These, of very great value, were conveyed by will to his daughters, and by marriage. settlement secured to her separate right and were accordingly willed to her two daughters, Mary and Dorothy. The former married, against her father's consent, John Lawrence, who was a Protestant, and socially inferior, doubtless, as he elected to follow the seas. The couple eloped and were married in the English Kirk at the Hague in Holland. As Mary Townley . Lawrence was about to become a mother, she made application to be received at Townley Hall but Sir Richard refused to receive her, and she returned to the ship Highflyer which had brought her from Holland, and of which her husband was the second officer; and on board this ship were born twin sons. The ship put into the port upon the Solway which was nearest to Corby Castle, where her sister Dorothy, who had married Lord Effingham, resided ; and there, at the church of the parish Witherel, to which Corby Castle belonged, the twins were baptized by the names of John and Jonathan. The former together with a sister Mary, subsequently born at the Hague, emigrated with their parents to America in the autumn of 1714, and the family were virtually lost to their English relatives, being in constructive disgrace from the powerful effect of the anger of Sir Richard Townley, of Townley Hall, whose high social position and great wealth added force to his displeasure throughout the circle of his kindred. These emigrants, John and Mary Lawrence, with their son and daughter, were with difficulty followed in their wanderings after their arrival in America, for the reason, chiefly, that the father and son followed the seas and the females would have only such temporary abodes on shore as might suit the coasting expeditions of father and son.

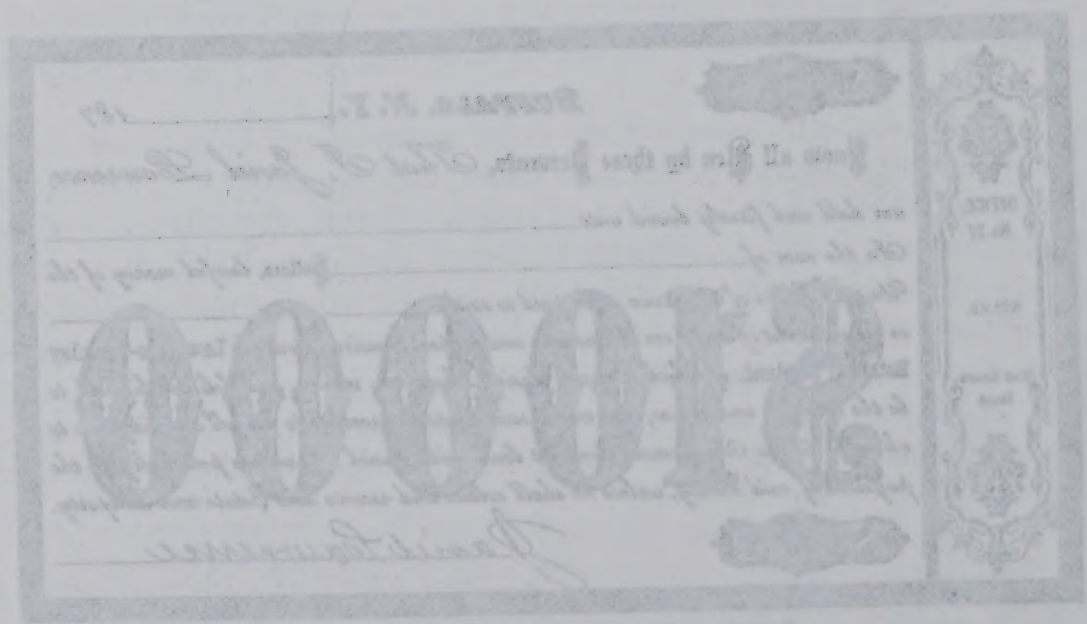
The son, however, eventually found a home at the mature age of 43,in a town not far from Boston, and his marriage is recorded to have taken place November13, 1738. He became conspicuous as an officer commissioned by Governor Shirley, in the French and Indian war, and was rewarded, with others, by his Majesty King George Third, by a grant of five hundred acres of land in Nova Scotia. Upon this grant he settled and there died in 1769. The family history has been traced from him with sufficient authenticity, it is supposed, to justify the institution of legal proceedings, and these have quite recently been commenced. In 1743,or five years after the marriage of Jonathan Lawrence, there culminated several large estates into one- the one now called the Lawrence Townley Estate.

Another of the Lawrence families claims descent from John Lawrence who settled in Watertown, Mass. They have the same general story,viz.:- "That John Lawrence married Mary Townley, ran away to America, etc. " For a full genealogy of this family, see The Genealogy of John Lawrence of Watetown, Mass. (by John Lawrence), printed by

Whipple, Boston, 1857. Next in prominence for their efforts is the Chase family, of which the late Chief Justice, Salmon P. Chase, was a member. And as early as 1847 (besides previous efforts in 1830), a lengthy notice appeared in a Baltimore paper, stating that by a decree of the High Court of Chancery, three-fourths of the Townley Estate belonged to William, Thomas, and Aquilla Chase, or descendants, and the remaining one-fourth to another brother, or descendants, whose Christian name the Court was unable to ascertain, This statement was entirely without foundation, as no such decree ever existed. Next we mention the Townley family, a family well known in the Middle and Western States, as well as in the Canadas; and one that has enrolled among its members the names of many prominent citizens. This family have been very enthusiastic in claiming that they were related to Mary Townley of Lancashire, and have spared no effort to prove their claim to be a true one. But without avail. Effingham Townley, of Elizabethtown, New Jersey (deceased),was so confident that the estate in question would fall to him, that he made provision for its distribution in his will to his children. They have family traditions concerning a large Townley Estate in England. besides a correspondence that passed between Richard Townley of New Jersey and Charles Townley, Clarenceux (descendant of Nicholas Townley, deceased, formerly of Littleton House near London). This correspondence was in 1765-6-7-8, and, although the marriage at that time had taken place, it referred in no way to a Mary Townley who left her home and came to America, nor to any estate for the heirs of such a person. Next we mention the Williams family of New Hampshire, who are positive that Sarah Lawrence, who married their ancestor, was the daughter of Mary Townley, who married Joseph Lawrence.




FACSIMILE. REDUCED ONE-THIRD OF ORIGINAL SIZE.



On the back of the bond of Jasiel Lawrence appears the following:

"GENEALOGY, AND DECREE OF CHANCERY"

" It is now certain that Jasiel Lawrence, of Watson, Lewis County, New York, is the SOLE HEIR to the Lawrence Townley Estate. The Lawrence family in different parts of the country have expended large sums of money in investigating their claims to this estate, but in vain, all of them having failed to prove their heirship to this immense fortune, as the pure blood of MARY TOWNLEY, through whom the estate is derived, did not flow in their veins. This Mary Townley was married in England to John Lawrence, the ancestor of the present Jasiel Lawrence. This marriage of John Lawrence and Mary Townley is found in the English Records. They emigrated to this country in 1716. The said John Lawrence, and Mary Townley his wife, had only one son, named Jonathan, who was the great-grandfather of Jasiel Lawrence, the present heir-at-law to this estate. This Jonathan Lawrence married Hannah Robbins, of Walpole, Massachusetts, in 1738, by whom he had two sons, Jonathan, Jr., and William. Jonathan Lawrence, Jr., was the eldest son, next heir to the estate, according to the laws of England. He was born in Walpole, Mass., in 1739. He married Rachael Smith, of Easton, Mass., in 1762. This fact is proved by the town records of Easton, and by other official documents in the possession of the present Jasiel Lawrence. This Jonathan Lawrence, Jr., and Rachael his wife, had two sons, Libbeus and Jasiel. Libbeus was born in Nova Scotia, in 1765, and died in Lansingburgh,N.Y.,in1818, leaving one son, John A. Lawrence, who died in Troy, N.Y., June lOth, 1857, leaving one son, Norman J. Lawrence, who died in 1862, without heirs. He was a soldier in the United States Army, and was shot while driving an ambulance. This closed the line of heirship of Libbeus Lawrence. Jasiel Lawrence, Sr., only brother of Libbeus, was born in Easton, Mass. in 1772,and died at Durhamville, Oneida County, N.Y., in 1842, leaving Jasiel Lawrence, Jr., of Watson, Lewis County, .N.Y., who was born September 30th, 1808, and is the oldest surviving son, and only heir to the estate, according to the law of England.
'The COURT OF CHANCERY of England, ordered by the House of Commons, February 23d, 1865, decided: That The Lawrence-Townley Estate remains unsettled, and as yet subject to a claimant, and there is marked on the Chancery books, -Heirs gone to America. The Court also passed the following decree: That' The Estate belongs to the heirs of Mary Townley, who, having married a Lawrence, settled in America, and her descendants are the legal heirs to the Estate. "

**[NOTE. -The above statement is false in every particular. ]**

There is still another family who claim Mary Townley as an ancestor, and who say that she married a Herbert. A few of the times and places of meetings of the above families are given below. There was a large gathering of the Townleys of America, at Elizabeth, New Jersey, September 21, 1845, at which time a commission was sent to England. In 1852-3, meetings were held, funds collected, and Columbus Smith, of West Saulsbury, Vermont, and J. B. Price, of Philadelphia, were sent to England as counsel. The report of Columbus Smith, I believe to be truthful, and, as far as his examination proceeded, considering that he was laboring in an entirely wrong direction, I think he accomplished all that the circumstances permitted.

A meeting of the Lawrences was held at the next of kin office of Mr. Hayes, 327 Broadway, and at the Merchants' Hotel, New York, in July, 1857.A large meeting of the heirs of John Lawrence, of Watertown, Mass., was held in Boston, in April, 1855. At the American Hotel, Toronto, Canada West, a large gathering of the claimants was held in April, 1867. A gathering of the possible heirs took place at Middletown, N. Y ., in October, 1877. The above are a few of the many meetings that have been held at different times by the supposed heirs to the Townley estate.

I quote the following from a pamphlet printed with the assent of Mr. Jasiel T. Lawrence: - " Some fifty years ago, in a suit brought by the Lawrences of Boston and vicinity, in the English Court of Chancery, the Court denied the suit as it was found, in the language of the decree, case No.24, 366 :'That the said claimants are not the lawful and lineal descendants of John Lawrence and Mary his wife; and that they are not in the line of descent.' The Ron. Abbott Lawrence and Daniel Webster, the latter in the interest of the Chase family, in its early connection with said estate, have had to do with the inquiries instituted." And from the same source I quote as follows:

*" The Opinions of Eminent Lawyers:*

"UTICA, N.Y., Aug. 8,1868.

" At the request of Mr. Jasiel Lawrence, of Lewis County, and others I have examined the general features of the claim made by him and others to property in England, known as the Townley Estate. In my opinion there is sufficient evidence that they are, and can probably establish that they are entitled to said estate, to warrant the employment of a competent person to investigate the matter, and thus ascertain whether their claim can be established or not by competent proof.

"

(Signed,)
FRANCIS
KERNAN

H. Stark, Verona,
R. W. Phillips, Utica, & others, *Witnesses*

ROCHESTER
July 5,
1870.

" Dear Sir: -In respect to the claim of Mr. Jasiel Lawrence, I have expressed the opinion that he is an heir to the Townley Estate, and the facts justify his expenditure of the necessary money to investigate and enforce his claim.
" " (Signed,) JOHN H. MARTINDALE,

Late Attorney General of the State of New York and Military Governor of D. C.
Witness- J. W. Parker, East Pike, Wyoming. County, New York."

Mr. P. Keam, of Keaw &, Porter, Attorneys-at-Law, Cincinnati, under date of May 3,1875.says:-"I have spent a great deal of time and patience in examining the title and claims of the several claimants to the Townley-Lawrence Estate in England. There is no doubt in my mind but that the estate, worth several millions of dollars, is there awaiting the lawful claimants. From numerous letters received from parties who have made a study of this question, and who were suppose to be authorities, we condense as follows :- "The last lineal descendant of Townley Hall was Charles Townley, who died in 1805. Since his death the Hall has been leased three times by the government to collateral heirs of the Townley family. A late occupant was Col. Charles Townley, who died suddenly on Saturday morning, November 11, 1876. The deceased was born in 1803.

The estate known as the Townley Estate consists of four estates that have lapsed into one, namely -the Howard Estate, descended from Francis Howard (Lord Effingham), on which Corby Castle is located; the Standish Estate; the Widdrington Estate and the Townley Estate, near Burnley, in Lancashire. Corby Castle and the Howard property are said to rent for four hundred thousand dollars per annum. Townley Hall and the Townley Estate are said to rent for a like sum per annum. In the wills of the late occupants of Townley Hall no transfer is made of any part of the Townley Estate.' The Townley Estate passed into Chancery in the early part of the present century, and the first advertisement concerning it appeared in 1827.

The following copies of circulars are of interest in this connection :

CAUTION.

WHEREAS, printed circulars have been sent out purporting to give the proceedings of a meeting of the LAWRENCE COMMITTEE, held at the Merchants' Hotel, in Courtlandt st., New York, July 20th, 1857, in which my name is used as being Chairman, and assigning the proceedings of said Committee.I was not Chairman of any Committee when Thomas Mc-Dowell and Lewis P. Hunt were chosen as Agents to proceed to England, nor did I sign any proceedings of any Committee held there.
*"Beware of the first fraud."*

JAMES S. LAWRENCE.
Freehold, N. J.

JULY 31st, 1857.

At a meeting of the Lawrence heirs, held at the next of kin office,327 Broadway, New-York, this day, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:
" That the heirs present recognize MR. HENRY HAYS as the only legitimate means of reaching the object at which they are aiming."

JA
S.
LA

JULY 24th, 1857.

LAWRENCE-TOWNLEY ASSOCIATION.
DAYTON, 0., June 1, 1873.

As a person interested in the Lawrence-Townley estate, your attention is called to the fact that there has been a decision of the English Court of Chancery, by which three fourths of the sum of $380,000,000 has been awarded to the American heirs of Mary Townley. This vast property comes from Sir R. Townley, living about 1600, at Townley Hall, Lancashire, England. Mary Townley was heir to this immense estate. $260,000,000 has

been awarded to her heirs in America, and as one of her heirs you are interested in the investigations of the following questions :

1. Who are the legal heirs of Mary Townley-Lawrence ?
2. What is necessary to do to establish said title or claim?
3. Can you establish your claim, or on what proof do you base your claim ?

We wish to impress upon you that no one but YOU can furnish your family history, consequently if you do not do it it will never be done. This is all that is wanting now. Will you do it? No other person has as much interest in your case as yourself. By furnishing us all the evidence you can obtain, as soon as possible, We may be able to supply any wanting links in your chain from other sources. But we can not do this without your help. Please forward to us as soon as possible a full family history of your ancestry as far back as you can give it- names, dates, &c. *not supposed*, but what yon can prove -and we will then place them, with others, in the hands of attorneys to arrange. Will you unite with us and give all the aid possible ? and there is no doubt about the successful result. It is a big undertaking, and can only be accomplished by united effort. If you do not desire to push your claim any longer, please notify W. L. Winchell, Corresponding Secretary of Lawrence-Townley Association, Dayton, Ohio, so that there may be no delay waiting for your proof. It may be a fortune to you to attend at once to this matter, but you alone must decide as to what you can or will do.

Respectfully,
W. L. WINCHELL,
J. D. FOX,
J. Q. A. COFFEEN.
Executive Committee.

## THE LAWRENCE-TOWNLEY ESTATE.

## NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS FORMED.

A Report of the Delegates to the Meeting, held at Buffalo, N.Y., Thursday, Feb. 3rd, 1876.

### PROCEEDINGS.

A meeting of the delegates, representing the interests of nearly all the heirs to the Lawrence-Townley Estate, as also, the interest of the heirs to the Lawrence Estate proper; was held at Buffalo on the 3rd day of February, 1876, for the purpose of taking further action in prosecuting the claims to these vast estates. After organizing the meeting by electing S. S. Brown, of Perrysburg, President, and P. Ream, of Cincinnati, Secretary, the

President stated that the object of meeting was to unite the interests of the several heirs into one common interest, under one body of Directors, so that the claims might be prosecuted more vigorously and harmoniously than had been done heretofore. D. B. Carver, of Albany, made a spirited speech, urging upon the Association the necessity of all members making a speedy compilation of their pedigrees, so that the case might be completed in Record evidence, before commencing action in the English Courts of Chancery. A full history of the organization and progress of the Western Branch of the Lawrence-Townley Association of Cincinnati, ,vas laid before the meeting by Dr. Shepherd, of Glendale, President, and P. Ream, of Cincinnati, the Counsel of the Association. After which the following resolutions were unanimously adopted.

lst. Resolved, That there be elected a National Board of Directors, consisting of seven members, five of whom shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; This Board to be clothed with authority from all parties interested in either of the estates, to perform such acts as in their opinion are necessary to raise funds to complete the records and pedigrees of the members, and to defray the expenses of a vigorous prosecution of the case to a final termination. The following gentlemen \were elected as members of the National Board of Directors :

Dr. SHEPHERD, Glendale, 0.
DAN. LAWRENCE, Reading, 0.
S.S.BROWN, Perrysburg, N. Y.
D. W. HAMMOND, Ontario, Canada.
FRED. WELLMAN, Cincinnati, 0.
CHARLES TINKER, Geneva, 0.
A. C. KINGSBURY, Watkins, N. Y.

2nd. Resolved, That the Board of Directors be empowered to elect delegates to procure Powers of Attorney and Releases from the heirs in both the United States and British Dominions; to draw up Articles of Association for the purpose of forming a Joint Stock Company, with power to issue Bonds, which shall be made in conformity with law, binding on all the heirs, for the purpose of raising funds to defray the necessary expenses in prosecuting the case; said funds to be used under the supervision and direction of the Board of Directors, in connection with their Counsel, and that they act with such Barrister or Barristers as may be retained by said Board, in the final prosecution of the case in England.

3rd. Resolved, That all papers, pedigrees, and Records of every description, and from all resources, shall be passed over to the National Board of Directors, to be used by them for their entire use and benefit, in completing the pedigree of any member who may be a contributor to the general fund, or for such other purpose as said Board may require. The Board may however give such a consideration for any valuable papers, as the)- shall deem just and equitable.

4th. Resolved, That all parties having an interest in either the Lawrence-Townley Estate, or in the Lawrence Estate, shall be entitled to the benefit arising from the genealogies or

pedigrees already compiled, or that may hereafter be traced out by order 0( said Board; and that their interest shall be prosecuted without any additional fee further than may be required as a general assessment by the Board of Directors for the purpose of liquidating expenses.
5th. Resolved, That this meeting recommends to the National Board of Directors as Counsel, D. B. Carver, of Albany; George Day, of Troy; Gen. Durbin Ward and Peter Ream, of Cincinnati ; and such Barristers in England as may hereafter be decided upon.
6th. Resolved, That said National Board of Directors do meet for the purpose of carrying into effect the above resolutions, at as early a date as possible. The same to convene at a call from Dr. Shepherd, of Glendale, who is to act as President until the regular organization of the Board.
DR. SHEPHERD, Prest., *Pro Tem. , P. REAM,* Sec'y, *Pro Tem.*

The above Association, properly known as " The Western I., Association of the Lawrence-Townley Estate," had for the basis of its action the statement that Richard Towneley, who married Mary, the daughter of Lord Widdrington, had two daughters - Mary, who married John Lawrence, and Dorothy, who married Sir Francis Howard, afterward Lord Effingham ; together with the remainder of this story as given on a preceding page. On the strength of this statement, certain members of the Lawrence family residing in Cincinnati and vicinity, who had never devoted themselves to genealogical matters, were persuaded to form the above Association. The statement was entirely false, as I have shown in another part of this volume; and those ,who expended their time, money, and labor, to form this Association, were sadly imposed upon. The President, Treasurer, and Secretary of the above Association, as well as the late Dr. Coffeen, I knew personally as being men of strict integrity and honesty of purpose. Dr. Shepherd, President of the above Association, has devoted himself for many years to the work of ascertaining the truth, or falsity, of the American traditions; and when he found that it could not be obtained through the medium of the Association in question, he sought my services in 1884, and ,we have gone to the bottom of the matter, as will be seen in the following chapters.

The statement that Sir Richard Towneley who married Mary Widdrington, had a daughter Dorothy, is false. Richard Towneley, born in 1687 (grandson of Richard Towneley- and Margaret Paston), married, subsequent to 1710, the Ron. Lady Mary, daughter of William, 3cl Lord Baron Widdrington, a copy of whose will ( drawn March 26th, 169-! ) is in my possession. They had no child named Dorothy; and not being married until after 1710, they could have had no daughter Mary to marry any John or Joseph Lawrence in 1690. nor 1693. The brother- in-law of this Richard Towneley- was William, 4th Lord Baron Widdrington, who married for his first wife *Jane* Tempest. He was heir to the Widdrington estates. Towneley and Widdrington were implicated in the Rebellion of 1715, and were tried for high treason. Towneley was acquitted, although he deserved to be convicted. Widdrington was convicted, but escaped death through the influence of friends in the Royal Court.

He was, however, deprived of his honors, his real and personal estate was sold, and the amount realized, together with the rents and profits thereof, in all about $500,000, was paid into the receipts of the Royal Exchequer.

This left William Widdrington a poor man, and in 1722 [see Journal of the House of Commons ] Parliament granted " to William, late Lord Widdrington, the sum of £12,000 to enable him to live." William Widdrington died at Bath, England, in -1743, having married for his second wife a Mrs. Graham.
Richard Towneley died August 18th, 1735. I have a copy of his will, and there is no mention in it of any daughter Dorothy. His will was drawn February, 1731-2, and probated October 1Oth,1735. The only daughter he had was Mary Catharine, who married Thomas Hornyold, of Blackmore Park, County of Worcester, Esq., who died in 1762. She was not of age when her father died. The " Historical Register and Chronological Diary ," for 1729 (vol. 16, p. 34), reports the death of Mary Widdrington as follows: -" July 2d, 1729, Dy'd, the Hon. Mrs. Mary Towneley, " wife of Richard Towneley, of Towneley, Esq ., and sister of the " present Lord Widdrington."

**There is not, and never was, any record of any marriage of a John Lawrence to a Mary Towneley, daughter of Richard Towneley and Mary Widdrington his wife. There is no record of the baptism of John and Jonathan Lawrence upon the Church Registers at Wetheral. I have visited Wetheral and Corby Castle, and the Corby estates do not, and never did, belong to the Towneley family. They are at present in the possession of one of the Howard family. Corby Castle is at present rented to Mr. E. Bebrens.**

**No John Lawrence with a wife Mary Townley, ever came to Massachusetts or Nova Scotia; and the Jonathan Lawrence who in 1738 married Hannah Robbins in Walpole, Mass., was not in any way descended from Richard Towneley and Mary Widdrington. The Lawrence family of England never resided at Ashton Hall, near Manchester. Ashton Hall, about 6 miles from Manchester, is in the village of *Ashton-under-Lyne,* and was the home of the Assheton, or Ashton, family. The home of the Lawrence family was Ashton Hall, about three miles from the city of Lancaster. A portion of the old building is still standing, but the property passed from the hands of the Lawrence family long ago. The last male heir was Sir Robert Lawrence, Knight, whose co-heiress Sibel married Thomas Hesketh, Esq., of Rufford. Ashton Hall passed into the possession of James Earl of Arran, in the latter part of the seventeenth century.**

Mr. George W. Chase, of Olathe, Kansas, has for years asserted that he found in England a Decree of the Court of Chancery, issued in relation to a suit brought by Jonathan Lawrence and others, in 1827, to recover the estate of Mary Townley who married John Lawrence. Mr. Chase gives the date of the issuing of this Decree as 1829, and states that he has a copy of it. In a circular issued by Mr. Chase, August 31st, 1875, is the following:

-"The great obstacle in the way was a lack of the date of the decision of the Court of Chancery. Within a short time I have obtained that, and can at any time after we get prepared, lay claim to it. There is but one place in England where it is recorded. " And in the same circular he says -" Above all the case was kept in Chancery for many years, and finally decided in 1829, which leaves us but a short time in which to present and prove our claim. The time is coming when I will publish, in circular form, the decision.

**I have personally examined the ' Decrees and Orders of the English Court of Chancery, as well as Chancery Bills and Answers,' from 1640 to 1860, under the names of Lawrence, Chase, and Townley, and I assert that there is no such Decree in existence, and never was. In a letter dated November 30th, 1880, Mr. Chase writes as follows: -' John Lawrence married Mary Townley in Holland and came to America. I have full proofs with dates. This Mary Townley was daughter of Sir Richard Townley, the last male heir in direct line to inherit " the estate." Having " full proofs with dates " is, to say the least, putting it rather strong. Within the past two years and fully nine years after he had written that he had obtained the date of the decision of the Court of Chancery" - Mr. Chase writes as follows: -' Mary Townley was married in London, in a church. Her parents were present, so the story of her elopement is not correct." There is a wide margin between his two statements. I have also personally examined the Records of the English Church in the city of Hague in Holland, as well as the records of Nova Scotia, and they contain no entry whatsoever of the marriage of a John or any other Lawrence to a Townley, nor the birth of any children from such parents. In fact, the name of Townley is not to be found in the said records.**

**James F. Jaquess and George W. Chase have for years deceived the public by spreading broadcast the story above referred to, and asserting it to be the truth. When I turned the direction of my work from the Stephens family to the families of Lawrence and Chase, I found that the said story formed the basis for the greater part of the action that had been and was being taken by the descendants of the Lawrence and Chase families. Step by step I have searched for the facts, and have found that these statements were false to the core.**

In 1880 Messrs. Lamphere and Usher of New York City began an investigation of the question herein dealt with. On his return to this country, from England, Mr. Usher issued his report to those for whom he had been working. I have never met Mr. Usher, but an examination of his report (in the light of my present knowledge) convinces me that he has worked not only intelligently but with an honesty of purpose; although he did not succeed in tracing to its true source the tradition that has been banded down for so many years in the Chase and Lawrence families.

## CHAPTER IV.

**REFERS TO THE MAIN LINE OF THE TOWNELEY FAMILY, OF TOWNELEY HALL, NEAR BURNLEY, LANCASHIRE, ENGLAND.**

**CHAPTER V.**

**THE ROYLE AND LITTLETON BRANCHES OF THE TOWNLEY FAMILY.**

**CHAPTER VI.**

**ELIZABETH LAWRENCE ALIAS CARTERET ALIAS TOWNLEY, AND HER SON JOSEPH LAWRENCE, TOGETHER WITH SOME MENTION OF JOHN, THOMAS, AND WILLIAM LAWRENCE OF LONG ISLAND.**

FROM Liber A of Deeds, p. 4, of Record at Jamaica, Queen's County, Long Island: Entered at the desire of Mr Richard Smith &c. 30 March, 1681.

These presents Wittnes that whereas there is a purpose of joining in Marriage with Capt. Philip Carteret of New Jersey it is joyntly and fully agreed between him the aforesaid and me Elizabeth Lawrence late wife of Capt. William Lawrence of Flushing deceased -that I the aforesaid Elizabeth doe reserve liberty to give and dispose of all my right of land and meadow or housing within the Neck called Tews Neck unto any of my sons whom I shall see good and that no engagement whatever shall impead this agreement.

ELIZABETH
LAWRENCE.

Wittneth
RICHARD SMITH
SARAH L. SMITH mark
ABIGAIL NICOLLS

Copy of the Will of Elizabeth Townley, of Record in the office of the Secretary of State, Trenton, New Jersey

" In the name of God, Amen, I Elizabeth Townley, the relict of Collo: Richard Townley of Elizabeth Town in ye County of Essex & Province of New Jersey, D: s'd, do think fit to make this my last will & testament in manner and form following I do give my Soul to

God, hoping for Salvation, thro' ye merits of my Lord and Saviour Jesus X't& my body to ye Earth to be decently buried in hopes of a glorious Resurrection at ye last day & as for my temporal goods, I dispose of them. as followeth Imprimis I give unto my daughter Sarah Shackmaple all the furniture of ye room, in which I now lye, viz't, The Bed CurtainS & Cloathes & every thing belonging to it, a chest of Drawers, a Small Table & a glass; with the Chaires, I likewise give. her two other Elbow-Chairs, covered with ye same sort of stuff, wch is in ye Curtains of ye sa,id Bed. Item, I give & bequeath all my estate, Goods & Chattels wtsoever that is mine, or ought to be mine, unto my son Charles Townley, his Heirs & Assignes, excepting half my plate, wch I give to my son Effingham tovards ye paymt of debts, & I charge & comand my son Effingham to be just to his brother Charles by granting him forthwith after my death a confirmation under his hand & seal for that land wch he knows his Father designed him; I do hereby constitute, authorize and appoint my dear son Charles to be sole Executor of this my last will & Testament, revoking and making null & void all other wills & Testaments by me heretofore made, either by word or in writing. In Testimony Whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this eight day of March in ye Tenth year of ye Reign of Anne over great Brittaine, ffrance & Ireland Queen &c Annoq Dom 1711-12.

The mark of
Elizabeth Townley L. S.

Signed, Sealed, published & declared by ye

Testatrix to be her last Will & Testament in ye presence of us:

EDWARD VAUGHAN, DEBORAH LAWRENCE, MARGARET WILLOCKS.
" Memorandum yt part of ye twelfth & thirteenth line was blotted out before ye signing & sealing of this Instrumt."

The second husband of the above lady was Sir Philip Carteret, of the Isle of Jersey in England, who was first governor of the Province of New Jersey in America. He drew his will Dec. 10,1682, which was proved the same month. In this will he gives his mother, Madame Rachell Carteret, all his houses, lands, *et cetera,* in the Isle of Jersey, for her use during her life, and at her decease to be divided among his brothers and sisters. He gives to my most dear and loving wife " all his houses, lands, *et cetera,* in New Jersey , unto her and her heirs forever,' and makes his dear wife his sole executrix. (See Liber A or 5 of Deeds, p. 17, Trenton, New Jersey.)

The maiden name of Elizabeth-Lawrence-Carteret- Townley was Smith. She was a

daughter of Richard Smith, the patentee of Smithtown, L.I. She married for her first husband Capt. William Lawrence of Flushing, L.I., and had by him, among other children, Joseph, who, it has been said, married a Mary Townley. There is no evidence to show that such a marriage ever took place.

In Liber H 2 of Deeds, p. 3-18, in Trenton, New Jersey, appears a deed signed by Joseph Lawrence, who deeds to Joseph Bonny of Woodbridge certain lands in East New Jersey. In this deed the grantor describes himself as " Joseph Lawrence of Flushing, in Queen's County in Nassau Island and Province of New Yor.k Gent. eldest son of Elizabeth Lawrence alias Carteret alias Townley deceasd of Elizabeth Town in the Province of East New Jersey.' This deed was drawn May 3, 1735, and Recorded June 26, 1755 by Affirmation of Daniel Lawrence being of the people called Quakers, , who was one of the witnesses.

From the fact that widow Elizabeth Lawrence became the wife of Sir Philip Carteret in 1681, the year after the decease of her first husband, and that, a short time after the decease in 1682 of her second husband, she married Richard Townley (who did not die until the latter part 0f 1707), it seems reason,.. able to suppose that her children *nee* Lawrence, who were still young, lived with her in the home of her third husband, and grew up with the children nee Townley of this third marriage. As it was quite natural that Richard Townley should have christened his eldest son Effingham, in remembrance of his friend Lord Howard, Baron of Effingham, in whose suite he came to America, it follows quite as naturally, that, out of regard for Effingham Townley, his Christian name should have been given to the grandson of his half-brother, Joseph Lawrence, and have come down through successive generations of both families.

The descendants of Joseph Lawrence, because Effingham has been used as a Christian name in their family, have looked upon that fact as of much importance in support of their tradition that their ancestor married Mary Towneley, daughter of Sir Richard Towneley of Lancashire, as they have believed that Dorothy Towneley (sister to Mary) married Francis Lord Howard, Baron of Effingham, which was not the case, as is shown below.

The following, from Holgate's American Genealogy,' forms the basis for the numerous traditions prevalent among the descendants of William Lawrence that his son Joseph married a Mary Towneley in 1690: -"Joseph Lawrence of Flushing, Long Island, in 1690, married Mary Townley daughter of Sir Richard Townley, son of Charles Townley who fell at Marston Moor. At the Restoration he was under the necessity of selling a very valuable estate at Nocton, near Leicester, in consequence of losses sustained by Sequestration. His daughter Dorothy, the younger sister of Mary, married Francis Howard of Corby afterward Baron Howard of Effingham, and who on the 8th of December, 1 781, was created 1st Earl of Effingham. He died 1743."

In the preceding there is no room for doubt as to which Sir Richard, Mary and Dorothy Towneley, are referred to. In Chapter IV. I have shown that the said Richard Towneley

had no daughter Mary living in 1685, and consequently could have had no daughter Mary in 1690 to have married Joseph Lawrence. And particularly so since his, the said Richard's, wife, died in 1672.Dorothy Towneley referred to in the above extract was the second wife of Francis Howard, Esq., of Corby : -"Captain of a Regiment of Foot and sometime Governor of Carlisle. Born 29 June 1635, died Dec. 17, 1702, buried at Wetherel." -Monumental Inscription.

Dorothy his widow died 13 Dec. 1712. Said Francis Howard was never created Baron of Effingham, nor did he leave any male issue. And yet, on the statement published in Holgate's American Genealogy," hundreds of people have been led to believe that the descendants of the said Joseph Lawrence were also descended from the main line of the Towneley family of Lancashire. Neither John nor Joseph Lawrence ever married Mary Townley who was sister to Dorothy Towneley. Neither John nor Joseph Lawrence ever married Mary Towneley, daughter of Sir Richard Townley and Mary Widdrington. **There is not an iota of evidence to show that the said Joseph Lawrence married a lady whose maiden name was Mary Towneley, either in the latter part of the seventeenth, or in the early part of the eighteenth, century; but there is an abundance of proof to show that there was no Mary Towneley belonging to the main line of the Towneley family at that time whom he could have married.**

John, Thomas, and William Lawrence of Long Island were brothers from St. Albans in Hertfordshire, England. They came to this country in 1635 in the ship Planter, Nicholas Trarice commander; and it has been supposed that the maiden name of their mother may have been Towneley. Such supposition I know to be erroneous, as I have not only a copy of the record of the birth of each of the said brothers, as well as a copy of the record of the birth and marriage of their parents and grandparents, but also the coat-of-arms , of their mother's family.

## CHAPTER VII.

## REFERS TO LAWRENCE, CHASE, AND OTHER FAMILIES HAVING THE TRADITION THAT ONE 0F THEIR ANCESTOIRS MARRIED A LADY TOWNLEY.

[ See John Lawrence of Wisset for a complete GEDCOM file on the below family]

I COME now to the families of Experience Lawrence who married Jabez Keep of Westford, Mass., and Tryphena Lawrence who married her cousin Jonas Lawrence of Canaan, Conn.

The descendants of the above have for many years believed that they were from the Towneley family through one Jonathan Lawrence who was son to John Lawrence and Mary Towneley, daughter of Sir Richard Townley, and sister to Dorothy Towneley of Lancashire.

I have already shown that no John, or any other Lawrence, ever married Mary, sister to Dorothy Towneley ; and this fact alone destroys the truthfulness of their family tradition.

But, as I have traced step by step the pedigree of the said Experience and Tryphena Lawrence, it may not be out of place to refer to it in brief in this connection.

Will of Major Eleazer Lawrence. Of Record in Liber 27 of Wills, p. 270, Cambridge, Mass. :

"In the name of God Amen the twenty ninth Day of December and in the year of our Lord one Thousand Seven Hundred and forty nine I Eleazer Lawrence of Littleton in ye County of Middys in New England Gentm Being of Perfect mind and memory but calling to mind the mortality of my Body and knowing that it is appointed for men once to Die Do make this my Last Will and Testament that is to say first of all I Recomend my soul in to The hands of God that gave it hoping through the merits of Jesus Christ to have free pardon of all my sins and to Inherit Etarnal Life and my body I commend to the Earth to be Deceantly Buried at ye Discretion of my Executors hereafter named and as Touching such Worldly estate wherewith God has Bestowed on me I Dispose in Manner and form as follows, Itn. I give and Bequeth to Mary my Dearly Beloved wife allimony and Bonds & nots for money due to me at my Decease and all ye Household Goods waring apparil and Cattle to her & her heirs and assigns forever and also Improvement of the house Barn and Lands That I shall *Dye* seazed off, During her life, she paying my just debts & funeral charges. Itn. I give and bequeath to my five sons vis. to my son Pelag Lawrance, Jonathn Lawrance, David Lawrance, Eleazer Lawrance, and Samuel Lawrance to them and their heirs & assigns the sum of Five shillings in money to each of them with what I have given to each of them by Deeds to be the full of their Portion out of my estate. Itm I give to my Daughters viz to ye heirs of my Daughter Elisabeth Buttrick Decead twenty shillings in money & to my Daughters Mary Fletcher, Sarah Cumings, and Experance Keep, Prudence Parker and to each of them or their heirs the sum of twenty shillings in money with what they have received before is to be the full of their portions out of my estate all which Legases to be paid unto them or their heirs in one year after my Decease by my executors hereafter named hereby I Do constute and appoint my wife abovsd and my son David Lawrance to be my Executors of this my Last will and Testament Disallowing all others aforemade by me. In witness whereof I have set my

hand and seal the Day and year above the words & Bonds & nots for money interlined before signing.

ELAZA LAWRANCE [SEAL ]

Signed sealed published and Declared to be ..... WILLIAM LAWRENCE
The last will & Testament of Eleazer Lawrance ..... NATHANIEL BOYNTON
In the Presence of: ..... JOSEPH BOYNTON

Of Record in the same office: --
"Littleton December ye 19th 1754 To the Honourable Saml Danforth Esqr Judge of Probate for ye County of Middlesex may it Please your honour We the Subscribers being the children of our Honoured Father and Grandfather major Eleazer Lawrence Late of Littleton Deceased We hereby give our consent that ye Will of our said Father and Grand Father should be Proved and a Proved; and Disire your Honour would alow of the same: and whereas there is some small estate Left by our father not Disposed of by will we Disire therefore that our aged mother may be allowed to take administration and that the Improvement of the whole may be settled upon Her During Her life."

PELEG LAWRENCE..... JABEZ KEEP
DAVID LAWRENCE..... EXPERIENCE KEEP.
ELEAZER LAWRENCE..... JOHN CUMINGS
SAMUEL LAWRENCE..... SARAH CUMINGS.
BENJA. DAVIS..... PETER P ARKER
SARAH DAVIS..... PRUDENCE PARKER.
ISAAC RUSSELL.
MARY RUSSELL.

The said Honorable Samuel Danforth January 13, 1755 granted Letters of Administration unto Mary the widow.

The above shows conclusively that Experience Lawrence, who married Jabez Keep, was the daughter of Major Eleazer Lawrence of Littleton, Mass., and *not* the daughter of Jonathan Lawrence, son of John Lawrence and Mary Townley. Major Eleazer Lawrence was born in Groton, Mass., Feb. 28, 1674.
When Littleton was set off from Groton, he became a citizen of Littleton; and his name appears in the records of that town as one of the original landed proprietors. He was a son

of Peleg Lawrence, who was born January 10, 1646-7, in Watertown, Mass., and who married, about 1667, Elizabeth Morse, and settled in Groton, Mass. The grandfather of Major Eleazer was John Lawrence of Watertown, Mass. [1st wife, Elizabeth -; 2d wife, Susannah, danghter of William Batchelder of Charlestown, Mass. ] ; removed to Groton, where he died, July 11,1667.
Major Eleazer Lawrence married Mary, daughter of Samuel and Elizabeth Scripture of Groton; born Feb'y 7, 1680, by whom he had the following children:

1. Eleazer, date of birth unknown.
2. Elizabeth, born Feb'y 28, 1699
3. Peleg, born June 1,1701
4. Jonathan, born Oct, 4,1703
5. David, born Dec. 26, 1705.
6. Mary, date of birth unknown.
7. Sarah, date of birth unknown.
8. Samuel, born May 2, 1714.
9. Experience, born June 22, 1719
10. Prudence, born April 7, 1722.

Of the above, Eleazer married, June 25, 1731, Lucy Tuttle, by ,whom he had (among other children) Simon, born January 11,1739, from whom some of the Walker and Adams families descend.

Jonathan married Tryphena Powers (his first wife), by whom he had Tryphena, born Sep. 26, 1735, who married Sep. 3, 1754, her cousin Jonas, son of Isaac Lawrence of Canaan, Conn., and died in West Stockbridge, Mass., Jan. 31, 1795, whose descendants, living in Tioga County, New York, and Bradford County, Penn., have spent a large sum of money in the vain endeavor to prove themselves descended £rom a Jonathan Lawrence, son of a John Lawrence and Mary Townley. The Jonathan Lawrence who was their ancestor is clearly, shown in the above.

Experience married at Westford, Mass., April 3, 1740, Jabez, son of Samuel and grandson of John Keep of Springfield, Mass. It will thus be seen that Experience Lawrence who married Jabez Keep in 1740, was aunt to Tryphena Lawrence, wife of Jonas, and daughter of Jonathan.

It is to be regretted that a few of the descendants of Experience Lawrence have insisted that the will of their ancestor Major Eleazer Lawrence is a forgery, and that the late Honorable Abbott Lawrence, while Minister of this Republic to the Court of Great Britain, caused certain gravestones to be taken from the graveyard at Groton, and transferred to England, by means of which he secured to himself, through parties in England. a large sum of money. This ridiculously false statement would not find a place here were it not for the fact that a few have influenced many to believe it to be the truth. Any one with the smallest degree of knowledge of genealogy and records will, without

any hesitation, admit the validity and genuineness of the documents above quoted, if they will only take the trouble to examine them in the Probate Office of Cambridge, Mass., where they are of record, and constantly under the custody of officials.

The Rev. John Lawrence of Cambridge, Mass., has compiled a most excellent genealogy of the descendants of John Lawrence of Watertown.

In addition to those mentioned, there are several other branches of the Lawrence family who have had the same Lawrence-Townley tradition. The majority of these can be traced either to John, Thomas, or William Lawrence of Long Island, or to John Lawrence of Watertown, Mass. The Kentucky branch of the Lawrence family, however, trace their pedigree to Levin Lawrence[ Leven (?) the signature to his will is Levin ] who married Susannah, daughter of John and Honor Dorsey of Maryland. She was born Dec. 12, 1717. Levin Lawrence died between April and September, 1756, and was probably buried in the graveyard upon the north side of the old Lawrence homestead, about twelve miles southwest from Ellicott City, Howard County, Maryland. The house of Levin Lawrence, built in 1741, was still in good preservation when I visited it some five years since. One of the descendants of Levin Lawrence residing in Louisville, Kentucky, has the following coat-of-arms that has been handed down from generation to generation. "Argent, a cross raguly, gules, crest, two laurel branches vert, forming a chaplet," which implies a descent from the Lawrence family of Lancashire, England.

On the maternal side the following is their traditional genealogy:

"According to the traditions of the family three brothers, Edward, Joshua and John Dorsey (or D' Arcy, as they were more frequently called in the early State Records,) emigrated from Ireland and settled in Maryland not long after its colonization, The first appearance of the name was in 1660, when a tract of land called 'The Bush' containing four hundred ' acres, lying near Chesapeake Bay and the mouth of the Severn River was granted to Edward D'Arcy, In 1664 there was granted to Edward, Joshua and John D' Arcy two thousand acres of land lying on the Severn River, not far from where the city of Annapolis now stands, A part of this Tract called 'Hackley in the Hole' remained in possession of John D'Arcy's descendants from 1664 to 1829. John D'Arcy married a lady whose Christian name vas Pleasance but whose surname is unknown, She survived her husband and married secondly Thomas Wainwright. John D'Arcy died in 1714 after having acquired a very large amount of real estate, most of it from Grants of the Lords Proprietary of Maryland many of his Surveys being at the present time among the most valuable lands in Anne Arundel County. He served for many years as a Burgess in the General Assembly. He had three children, Caleb, Edward and Deborah, Edward died in the lifetime of his father, leaving Edward and John.[?]
Caleb married Eleanor Warfield and died at an advanced age leaving a large property, as well as a large family.
John, son of Edward married Honor --- whose daughter Susannah married Levin Lawrence,"

The Towneley Arms are quartered with those of D'Arcy, as is of record in the College of Arms, London. It is possible that the descendants of Levin Lawrence through the family of Dorsey, or D'Arcy, may be descended from the Townley family, The descendants of Levin Lawrence are among the best citizens of Kentucky; and, while engaged in tracing their pedigree, they assisted me in my search by every means in their power.

Another Lawrence family, not heretofore mentioned, descends from Thomas Laurenzen, who married, June 9, 1663, Marritje Jans (widow of Cornelis Van Langvelt), and have also had the tradition of a Lawrence-Townley alliance. But the members of this family now living are convinced that such a tradition had no foundation in fact.
Thomas Laurenzen above was from Groningen in Holland; and, upon his admission to the Dutch Church in New York in 1662, he was styled "Thomas Laurenzen, Popinga" which has puzzled his descendants of the present generation. His son, Baptized Laurens Thomassen, married May 10, 1687, Catharine Lewis. She died Sep. 15, 1702, and her descendants are scattered throughout the States of New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Ohio. Thomas Laurenzen belonged to the family of Adolphus Laurens, who in 1660 was Registrar and Burgomeister of Groningen in Holland, and who used a seal similar to the one now in possession of the descendants of the said Thomas.

Hannah Lawrence [see William Lawrence line] of New Jersey, who, December 8, 1771, married Richard Chamberlin of the same State, and Elizabeth Lawrence, who, July 26 1756, married David Olden, both of New Jersey, were descended from an ancestor totally distinct from any heretofore referred to, who came to this country about the middle of the seventeenth century. The same Lawrence-Townley alliance has been of tradition in this family, but without foundation.

There was a Joseph Lawrence [see Wisset line] with wife Mary living in Plainfield, and Killingly, Conn., in the early part of the eighteenth century. Said Mary survived her husband, and drew her will March 7, 1765 which was proved April 10, 1769. In it she mentions her daughter Mary and her grandchildren "Rachel Lawrence, Abigail Cady, Experience Williams, Relief Lawrence, Sarah Williams, Barcilla Gallup, Joseph Lawrence, Thomas Lawrence and Josiah Lawrence to eac of them a bible." Her daughter Mary married for her first husband Lemuel Dean, and after his decease she married John Williams, through which marriages the same Lawrence-Townley-marriage story has found its way into Warren, Williams, and Dean families of New England and the West.
The said Joseph Lawrence of Plainfield, Conn., and Daniel Lawrence of Killingly,Conn. (whose descendants, have had the same story), are probably descended from John Lawrence of Watertown, Mass.

The descendants of Jacob Lawrence and of Timothy Tallman of Fishkill, N.Y., have the same story. These families, as well as the Willett family, descend from one of the three immigrants, John, Thomas, or William Lawrence, of Long Island, and none of their

ancestors married Mary Townley.

The Mackoy family of Kansas have had this same story with, the variation that Mary, daughter of John Lawrence and Mary Townley, married their ancestor Charles Gresham, with whom she lived in King William County, Va.; and that a daughter born of this marriage became the wife of ,their, great-grandfather, which is entirely a mistake.

Others of the Lawrence family, living in Massachusetts, Nova Scotia, and the Canadas, who trace their pedigree to Richard Lawrence of Richmond County, N,Y., have the same story, namely, that he married Mary Townley of Lancashire, which is also erroneous.

The descendants of Thomas, William, and Aquilla Chase have likewise been enthusiastic in the belief that it was one of their ancestors who married Mary, daughter of Sir Richard Townley of Lancashire. They have been encouraged in this belief by designing men, and they do not descend from any of the Townley family. I cannot show any proof that Thomas, William, and Aquilla Chase were related to the grandparents of Richard Chase who married Margaret Townley, as I have not devoted my time and labor in that direction; but it is a likely supposition that they were so related, and that thus has come down to the present generation the tradition of the marriage of Lady Townley with one of their ancestors, together with the tradition of an estate in England belonging to them in consequence of such marriage.

From the preceding, the reader will note that the tradition of the marriage of Mary Townley of Lancashire to a Lawrence and a Chase (which I have shown to be false), has found its way into a number of families in this country. It is probable that the first interest in a property in England, belonging to a Chase family of America, began in 1735, when the will of Francis Townley (see pedigree, branch D) was contested by his sister Honor Hodgson, and other members of his family. Jeremiah, the father of Margaret Townley, who married Richard Chase, was only brother to the said Francis; and although Jeremiah was dead at the time of this suit, the property of his brother Francis, a part of it at least, should have descended to his daughter and only child, instead of falling to an entire stranger.

It is also probable that in 1796, when the properties of Royle and Greenfield, for want of an heir male, reverted to Anne Townley, who married Robert Parker, the descendants then living of Col. Richard Townley of New Jersey, and of Margaret (Townley) Chase of Maryland, as well as of Joseph Lawrence of Long Island, became somewhat excited over the event, and that such excitement extended to the various branches of the Lawrence and Chase families of America.

A new interest may have been aroused when; on Tuesday, June 11, 1822, "The London Times "printed the following:

"Parliamentary Intelligence, House of Commons Mon. June 10. Sir Robert Wilson said that a certain sum of money had been left by a Col. Townley for the benefit of widows of certain officers. He wished to know why the testators Will had not been yet carried into execution though the testator had died some years ago. Sir Charles Long said that the

£10,000 had been left to the Secretary at War for the widows of Captains, lieutenants, & ensigns, but that it had been necessary to take legal opinion as to the mode of proceeding; and the result ,was that certain formalities must be gone through which required all the time that had since elapsed."

It has been frequently stated by parties in America that "The London Times" had years ago referred to a Townley estate dealt with by the House of Commons.
The above is the only reference, that I have been able to find, in support of such a statement, for which reason I have quoted it.

It has grown to be a nuisance to our foreign representatives in London, that they are constantly receiving letters about some estate that the writers fancy themselves entitled to. If the writers of such letters would only *think* before doing so, they would discover that the United States of America does not allow its representatives abroad any time or latitude for attending to such business.

There are also many who think they are entitled to money in the Bank of England. The Bank of England has under its control millions of dollars in unclaimed dividends. Now, suppose a person has good grounds for believing that he is entitled to a portion of these dividends; then the proper course to be pursued is for him to trace his pedigree to the one from whom he claims descent. If such pedigree is approved by the "College of Arms in London, then the matter can be brought before the Court of Directors of the Bank of England, and the money can be obtained.

I cannot close this volume without referring in brief to an opinion, that has taken hold of the minds of many, that some of my predecessors have been bought off from giving the heirs the true facts in the case. I undertook the work I have performed for the purpose of discovering if there were any grounds for the American traditions, and with a determination to carry it through to a finish, and present the actual facts to the public. Of course I labored hoping for a financial reward, which I have not obtained; and I can assure my readers, that any insinuations that either my predecessors or myself have been bought off, are as false as they are base.

In closing I wish to thank each and everyone who have in any way aided me in my efforts; and, if the facts which I have collected with much labor will prevent the public in future from paying any attention to the statements that I have shown to be false, I shall feel that my work has not been entirely in vain.

NOTE. -Those of the descendants of Robert and Mary Stevens (as well as their representatives) who have aided me in my work, will receive a copy of this book *free gratis.*
Those descendants of Col. Richard Townley, of New Jersey, and those descendants of Margaret (Townley) Chase, of Maryland, who have deeded to Dr. Alfred Shepherd and myself, will receive a copy of this book *free gratis.*

To all others, the price of this book, *with the pedigrees,* will be $4 per copy. For the book, *without the pedigrees,* the price will be $3 per copy. For the pedigrees alone, the price will be $2 each. Address the author, P,O. Box No. 1912, BOSTON, MASS..

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OWOSSO, - - MICH.

Sept 24th 1895.

Mr P. H. Lawrence, Sir

I saw a notice, in the Detroit Evening Journal, with regard to Mich. Claimants, to an English Estate, "From an Inquiry Association" And I address you, Sir, as Secretary of that Association, with regard to the heirs of the Lawrence family, to which I claim re,- -lationship. My Mother, was Hannah Lawrence, Daughter

of Samuel, & Rhoda, Lawrence
who resided at "South Salem"
Westchester, County. New York
about the year, 1775, & later
Their children, were, Sons. 4
Daughters, 5 I think.
Samuel, Lawrence jr.
Mynor, Lawrence,
Joel, Lawrence,
Benedict Lawrence,
Daughters.
Rhoda Lawrence.
Elizabeth Lawrence.
Molly Lawrence.
Hannah Lawrence - my Mother
Mary Lawrence

Hannah Lawrence, was Married
to Daniel & Wilson jr Son of
Daniel Wilson, Sr
My father moved to Verona Onei-
-da Co NY - about the year 1798
Subsequently. Move to Covington
Genesee co NY, Their Children were
~~1 Samuel, Lawrence, Wilson,~~
1st Betsey, Mariah. Wilson, - Dead
2d Samuel, Lawrence, Wilson "
3d Laura, H. Wilson. "
4th Ruth. Wilson. - - - -
5th Thomas. Wilson. - - - -
6th Ammon. Wilson, "
7th Rhoda. A. Wilson, "
8th Sarah. A. Wilson. - - - -

My Brother Thomas, and Sister
Ruth are now living in Saranac
Mich

Any farther information wanted will be promptly responded to -
Please answer soon and oblige Yours &c

Sarah A. Fargo
Owosso Shiawassee Co
Mich

Belsey Maria, Married, Erastus Prentice
had one son
William

Samuel L. married Sebrina Shaw
had two sons & one
daughter

Laura Died at 24 single

Ruth, Married Amil Chipman.
had 9 children four living
one Son George, & three
Daughters

Thomas Wilson married Mary E Dodge
had 6 children 4 living

Ammon married 1st Emily Whitlock
had 1 child both deceased, 2d married
Elizabeth of Stamford Conn
had one son
Grant Wilson

Rhoda A. married Gideon Webb
had 2 sons,
Thomas & Charles.

Sarah A. Married.
David Mason Fargo -
They had eight children, all
living but one. They are -
David Wilson, Laura Ann, George Francis
deceased
Henry S. - Emily L. - Amelia R. & Ellen
- Josephine - J. Frank, F. Fargo -

Owasso, Michigan
September 25, 1895

Mr. P. J. Lawrence, Sir

I saw a notice in the Detroit Evening Journal with regard to Michigan claimants to an English Estate, "from an Inquiry Association" and I address you sir, as Secretary of that Association. With regard to the heirs of the Lawrence family, to which I claim relationship. My mother, was Hannah Lawrence, daughter of Samuel and Rhoda Lawrence who resided at "South Salem", Westchester County, New York, about the year 1775 and later. Their children were sons 4, daughters, 5 I think.

Samuel Lawrence Jr.
Mynor Lawrence
Joel Lawrence
Benedict Lawrence
Daughters
Rhoda Lawrence
Elizabeth Lawrence
Molly Lawrence
Hannah Lawrence (my mother)
Mary Lawrence

Hannah Lawrence was married to Daniel Wilson Jr., son of Daniel Wilson Sr. My father moved to Verona, Oneida Co. New York about the year 1778. Subsequently he moved to Covington, Genesee County, New York. Their children were:

Betsy Mariah Wilson (died)
Samuel Lawrence Wilson (died)
Laura N. Wilson (died)
Ruth Wilson
Thomas Wilson
Ammon Wilson
Rhoda A.Wilson
Sarah A. Wilson.

Betsy Maria married Erastus Prentice, had one son, William.
Samuel Lawrence married Sebrina Shaw, Had two sons and one daughter
Laura died at 24 years, single
Ruth married Ami Chipman has 4 children, one son George and three daughters

Thomas Wilson married Mary E. Dodge, had 6 children, 4 living.
Ammon married 1st, Emily Whitlock, has one child, Elizabeth, both deceased, 2nd,married Elizabeth _____ of Stamford, Connecticut, has one son, Grant Wilson
Rhoda A. married Gideon Webb, had two sons, Thomas and Charles
Sarah A., married David Mason Fargo, they had eight children all living but one. They are:

David Mason Wilson Fargo
Laura Ann Fargo
George Francis (deceased)
Henry S. Fargo
Emily L. Fargo
Amelia A. Fargo
Ellen Fargo
Josephine Fargo
Frank F. Fargo

My brother, Thomas and sister Ruth are now living in Saranac, Michigan.Any further information wanted will be promptly responded to.

Please answer soon and oblige. Yours,

Sarah A. Fargo, Owasso Shiawassee County, Michigan

Grand Rapids, Michigan
December 24, 1885

Our committee delegates, Mr. Eaton and Mr. Dufea returned from Toronto and all is right- Will explain further at another time. All is explained and the standing of the men is good. There will doubtless be a general meeting in Detroit and the Toronto parties will be there asking all to a part in the re-organization of the consolidated association and election of officers and assuring for -----(?) and complete legal association. The ----(?) seem all right. Emphatically Mr. Geare will be here with it next Monday. Excuse for hastening

Mrs. S. E. Walton

Grand Rapids Mich

Dec 24th 1895

Dear Comrade Delegate - Mrs Eaton & Mrs Dafoe returned from Toronto & all is right - Will Explain further at another time all is Explained & the standing of the men is good this will Doubtless Be a general Call no the Date further for a meeting in Detroit & the Toronto Parties will Be there asking all to Take no Part in a reorganization of the Consolidated association & Election of officers & assuring fair representation & Complied - Legal Association the Old Seem & all right Explained this year will Be ~~Held~~ with in Next Monday Excuse me for Now Time

Miss S C Watson

Gordon Lamarn Married Feb 9th 1769

She was Born Jan 17th 1748

he was Died Oct 27th 1825
on Thursday 90 minuts past 12
at Noon Age 77 years 7 months &
25 days Tex 38 × 90 Psalms 2 part
Tex 4 Chapters of Romans 7 verse

Mother Lamarn Died Feb 29th
1836 at 7 Oclock in the Morning
Tex 1st Thessalonians 4 Chapter
Begining of the 13 verse & to
the End of the Chapter
Attended By Elder Willis

That Was Poor Boys

the Vermont People Say Experience Look Care of Jonathans Children until his father married Hannah Robbins in 1758. But the Question is who was mother of these Children & who were they Mary, Josiah Jacob, John, & Samuel, Seems to Be what the Vermont People Say as Experience is Given as the Eldest, But they Say Josiah was Born 1748 and soon after Say that Jonathan Married Hannah Rathbun in 1758 & Jonathan Lives Mary a Hannah Robbins as I saw in Walpool a Record of that Marriage, also saw this in the Town Book & Daniel Robbins took Hannah Lawren & Daughters (Off) of the Town in August 1777) Where Could the other Children of Been then

Jonathan L first wife was Elizabeth Butrick when or where married & have Got to Learn She must have Died a Good long after Josiahs Birth for 4 years after his Birth 1754 & the Mar in Josiah father to Hannah Robbins in 1758 Of the relation Age of Josiah Brother & Sister I do not Know But he must of Been the Youngest Except one if not the youngest - He married Mary Branch in Warwick Town March 18, 1761 Being 27 old

George W Lazydon
Barabao (Wis)

Rockford, October 28, 1885

Mr. P. J. Lawrence
Winnebago

Dear Uncle,

You wished me to keep you posted and I think I am right on the post so here goes. I wrote to Mrs. Morgan of Bennington (VT) and she wrote me that her grandmother was a daughter of Jonathan Lawrence and I received another letter from Mrs. Bigelow that this Mary Lawrence was her grandfather's sister. Today I received a second letter from Mrs. Morgan with the following records from Norwich (Connecticut) enclosed. I sent you a copy.

Record from Norwich:

1st book, page 70: Isaac Lawrence married Susannah Reed in 1708
Children: Samuel Lawrence, born November 29, 1710
Hannah Lawrence, born March 18, 1711
Deborah Lawrence, born May 6, 1714
Jonathan Lawrence, died May 21, 1733 (no record of his birth given in this.

1st book, page 72: Isaac Lawrence Sr. Died April 19, 1733 (born, 1660)
Jonathan Lawrence, Married October 29, 1753 to Mary Jackson

2nd book, page 241 Jonathan Lawrence, married October 29, 1759 to Mariah Ormsby
Children:
Ruben Lawrence, born June 22, 1760
Lydia Lawrence, born January 15, 1762
Joanna Lawrence, born May 31, 1765

2nd book, page 273 Josiah Lawrence married March 18, 1761 to Mary Branch, a widow
Children:
Mary Lawrence, born December 19, 1761
Josiah Lawrence, born November 29, 1763
Lucy Lawrence, born April 23, 1765

2nd book, page 311 Samuel Lawrence married Thankful Cady, November 29,1766
Children:
Solomon Lawrence, born September 14, 1767

2nd book, page 363 Hannah Lawrence married Samuel Palmer 1763

1st book, page 174 Samuel Lawrence and wife Mary
Children:
Josiah Lawrence, born August 18, 1734
Jonathan Lawrence, born April 19, 1736
Samuel Lawrence, born January 5, 1738
Mary Lawrence, born April 18, 1741
Hannah Lawrence, born July 23, 1743
John Lawrence, born February 19, 1745

Deborah Lawrence, born January 23, 1747
Anne Lawrence, born December 2, 1754
Susanna Lawrence, born February 8, 1757

2nd book, p.2: Hannah Lawrence married David Palmer February 28, 1740

2nd book, p 236 Mary Lawrence married Samuel Safford September 25, 1760

2nd book, p.270 Mary Lawrence married Samuel Safford August 13, 1760

1st book P 48 Abigail Lawrence married William Walbridge, July 27, 1713

Now, what do you think? (I know what you think, you think damit) Here too. There must have been some revolvers in the Lawrence family by the looks of the records enclosed. Mrs. Morgan wrote that a John Lawrence living there called and said his grandfather was the eldest son of Josiah and that he knew his great grandfather was Jonathan Lawrence. So I am going to write him and see if I cannot find some more records of the family. If so, I'll send them to you. Will close as it is most midnight. Write for I am most dead to hear from someone. Good night.

O.W. Lawrence (?)

P.S. Where is your John Lawrence born in 1801?

Monkton Ridge, Vermont
December 11, 1885

Mr. Lawrence- I received your letter yesterday and send this out today- I will give you my own birthplace, age, etc.

I was born in the town of Monkton, County of Addison and State of Vermont. I was May 18th, 1804. I am now 81 years and still smart as a young man- never had a sickness of any account. My grandfather was Josiah Lawrence- now he married widow Mary Branch of Norwich, Connecticut March 18- 1761.

He remained in Norwich a few years and moved into the town of Woodford, Vermont where he made a few years stop and then removed to Bennington where he remained during life. His children were as follows:

Mary, Josiah Jr., Lucy, Roger, Deborah, Diah, Juduh and Solomon.

Juduh died April 20, 1778.

My great grandfather Jonathan had a son John who settled on the Hudson at Fishkill but we know nothing about the children of this new marriage if he was married a second time.

Our grandfather Josiah was the son of Jonathan Lawrence, his youngest child- who after his mother's death was cared for by his sister Experience during his early life. My great grandfather Jonathan died in England or in Nova Scotia where the English government had given him a trust of land for service rendered in the French and Indian war.

Yours ------

Almon Lawrence